The Bookman

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

THE BOOKMAN 250 GUINEAS PRIZE COMPETITION.

The increasing cost of book-production is, in these days, raising very serious difficulties for the author as well as for the publisher—especially for the author who is unknown.

It has always been part of The Bookman's *programme to look out for new talent and encourage young authors of promise and, in the adverse circumstances that face them at present, we have decided to offer*

A Prize of 250 Guineas for the best First Novel.

For the purposes of this Competition a "first" novel is defined as one by a writer who has never before had a work of fiction (other than a volume of short stories) published in book form.

Full particulars of the Competition will be sent on application, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, to The Editor, The Bookman, *St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.*

The December Bookman, our Special Christmas Number, will contain a series of beautiful presentation plates in colour and in black-and-white; a Portfolio of Colour Pictures; four fully illustrated Supplements dealing with the new books of the season, and, in addition to all other usual features, a series of articles on Sir J. M. Barrie and various phases of his dramatic art by G. K. Chesterton, Alfred Sutro, Gerald du Maurier, Hilda Trevelyan, Fay Compton and Sheila Kaye-Smith, and a symposium on "Barrie and the Stage" by Sir Squire Bancroft, Jerome K. Jerome, Mrs. W. K. Clifford, "Rita," J. E. Buckrose, Harold Begbie, Arthur Rackham, Beatrice Harraden, Sir Oliver Lodge and the Right Hon. J. R. Clynes, M.P. The illustrations will include drawings and photographs of scenes and characters from Sir James Barrie's plays. As, owing to mechanical difficulties, the Number cannot be reprinted, our readers are urged to place their orders without delay.

One of the most important of this autumn's announcements is of the publication in fifteen volumes of an edition de luxe of the works of Lord Morley. It will contain a portrait of the author from the painting by the Hon. John Collier, and will be uniform with Messrs. Macmillan's edition de luxe of Tennyson, Pater, Hardy, etc.

A new book of lyrics by Mr. Laurence Binyon, "The Secret: Sixty Poems," will be published this

Mr. G. R. Stirling Taylor,

whose new book, "Modern English Statesmen" (Allen & Unwin), is reviewed in this Number.

month by Mr. Elkin Mathews, who has also in the press a small book, "A Sequence of Seven Sonnets," by the Hon. Evan Roberts.

Two long and interesting literary partnerships have been severed by the death, within a few weeks of each other, of Mr. Egerton Castle and Mr. Charles Norris Williamson. Mr. Castle had written romances, plays and other books before he began to work in collaboration with his wife; but Mr. Williamson, after doing a lot of good journalistic work on the staff of the *Graphic*, and editing *Black and White*, only discovered himself as a novelist after his marriage to a charming American writer, Miss Alice Muriel Livingstone. Their long succession of very up-to-date novels of life in London, on the Continent, in America and elsewhere, reflected their own travels about the world and cosmopolitan outlook, and have vied in popularity with the picturesque old-time romances of Mr. and Mrs. Egerton Castle.

The Swarthmore Press has published a new edition of "Words of Pain," a striking volume which discusses the great problems of religion and everyday life in a series of letters written by a woman in the thirties who was definitely aware that she was approaching death.

"Children's Tales from the Russian Ballet," by Edith Sitwell, with eight four-colour reproductions of scenes from the ballet by I. de B. Lockyer, will be published immediately by Messrs. Leonard Parsons.

Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son, who celebrated the centenary of their foundation last mouth, have arranged to continue the experiment that they tried last winter when they retained the services of Mr. S. P. B. Mais to deliver a series of lectures to their selling staff on "Books and their Writers." A new series of lectures was commenced on the 14th October, when Sir R. Baden-Powell, K.C.B., delivered an address in the lecture hall of the new W. H. Smith building in Portugal Street, on "Our Boys." Amongst others who have arranged to lecture there during the winter season are Mr. W. J. Locke, on "The Writing of a Novel"; Mr. Hamilton Fyfe, on "Book Reviews"; Mr. Sidney Dark, on "Makers of Modern Fiction"; and Lord Haldane, on "Character in Business."

"A New Activity?" an exhaustive treatise on Mrs. Dickinson's discovery of a new Radio-Activity, with a special chapter devoted to radium itself, by Frank A. Hotblack, is announced by Messrs. Jarrold.

"Charles Bradlaugh," an admirable study of the man, his personality and his career, by the Right Hon. J. M. Robertson, has been added by Messrs. Watts & Co. to their Life Stories of Famous Men series.

Messrs. Nelson are publishing a compact, up-to-date work of reference, "The New Age Encyclopædia," edited by Sir Edward Parrott, assisted by

Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Mr. Everard R. Calthorp,**

whose new book, "The Horse as Comrade and Friend," is published by Messrs. Hutchinson.

a large staff of experts. It is to be completed in 10 volumes (3s. 6d. net each). The two first, published last month, are handy in size, neat in appearance and their concise, well-written articles, illustrated with useful maps, diagrams and pictures, are thoroughly up to date and reliable.

A little collection of poems by Mr. Thomas Sharp, published last month by Mr. A. C. Fifield, under the title of "A Score in Metre," will be welcomed by all lovers of devotional verse. There is deep sincerity, as well as poetry, in Mr. Sharp's work, as those will know who have already made acquaintance with it in the *Cambridge Magazine* and other periodicals.

Mr. Thomas Sharp.

One of the poems in his book ("Nicodemus") has been adapted as a hymn by the Presbyterian Church of England.

Mr. Robert J. C. Stead, the Canadian poet and novelist, whose "Kitchener and Other Poems," "The Homesteader" and "The Cow Puncher" won him a wide circle of English readers, has been spending a well-earned vacation in this country. An incidental object of his visit was to arrange for a cheap edition of his novels, of which three have been published, and a fourth is in the press. In Canada Mr. Stead enjoys the distinction of being a "best seller" both in prose and verse, and in serial form his stories reach millions of readers. His new novel, "Dennison Grant," will be published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton this month.

Mr. E. Hesketh Hubbard, A.R.W.A.,

the landscape painter and etcher, who founded The Print Society. The Society has just published a book "On Making and Collecting Etchings," of which Mr. Hubbard is the editor.

The new Rackham book which Messrs. Heinemann publish for this Christmas is the old fairy story of "The Sleeping Beauty," retold and amplified by

Mr. Robert J. C. Stead.

From a photograph taken by Mr. W. T. Cranfield on board the *Prince Frederick Wilhelm* last August.

Mr. C. S. Evans, and illustrated by Mr. Arthur Rackham in colour and silhouette.

Messrs. Heinemann have published a cheap edition of "Nash and Some Others," by C. S. Evans (2s. net), a book of stories that for their delightful humour and understanding of the mind and heart of boyhood were ranked by the critics, on their first appearance a few years ago, with Mr. Kenneth Grahame's "The Golden Age."

By the death of Mr. William Heinemann London has lost one of its most notable publishers, and one who maintained throughout his career the highest publishing traditions. The fact that a book is "a Heinemann book" has long been in itself a recommendation. Mr. Heinemann was that rare combination, a sound man of business and a sound judge of literature; moreover, he was never afraid to take risks and back his opinions. Not a few young writers owed something more than their start to his discernment and generous encouragement, and it is in keeping with the genuine interest he had in literature for its own sake that under his will he has left half of his residuary estate, subject to the life interest of his mother and two sisters, as a gift to the Royal Society of Literature for the establishment of a foundation or scholarship fund, to be called "The Heinemann Foundation for Literature"; its purpose being to help in the production of literary work of real value. Fiction is not to be excluded from the competitions, but the judges are requested to bear in mind that the testator's intention is primarily to reward those classes of literature that are least remunerative—poetry, criticism, biography, history. The will also leaves £500 to the Publishers' Association of Great Britain and Ireland; and £500 to the National Book Trade Provident Society, of which Mr. Heinemann was President from 1913 to 1919.

Mr. William Heinemann.

There was a time when the name and work of John Clare, "the Northamptonshire Poet," were familiar to all lovers of poetry, but of late he has fallen rather out of remembrance. Interest in both will be revived by "John Clare: Poems Chiefly from MSS.," which Mr. R. Cobden-Sanderson has in the press. The book has been edited by Edmund Blunden and Alan Porter, who have made their selection largely from Clare's hitherto uncollected fugitive contributions to local papers and notably from hundreds of poems he left in MS., including a number of remarkable lyrics written by him while he was in the Northamptonshire Asylum and now for the first time published.

A new novel by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, "From the Vasty Deep," will be published shortly by Messrs. Hutchinson. It is, as its title suggests, a story with a strong psychic interest.

"Modern Men of Mark," by Mrs. Stuart Menzies, which Mr. Herbert Jenkins publishes, tells, with a wealth of anecdote, the romantic life stories of Lord Northcliffe, Lord Leverhulme, Lord Armstrong, Sir Richard Burbage, Sir Joseph Lyons, and others whose work has contributed to the greatness of the British Empire.

"Who's Who in America: 1920–1921," will be published shortly by Mr. Stanley Paul.

"Rising Above the Ruins in France," which Messrs. Putnam publish, is written by Mrs. Corinna Haven Smith (a daughter of Major G. H. Putnam) and Mrs. Caroline R. Hill, who were engaged on war work at home and abroad from 1915, and after the Armistice devoted themselves to re-establishing normal life in the devastated areas.

"Venus and Mr. Vulcan," which Messrs. Heath, Cranton are to publish, is a novel by A. E. Cropper and Malcom Treacher, two London journalists, one on the staff of a great daily, the other a frequent contributor to the *Connoisseur*.

Mrs. B. M. Croker, whose death we regret to record, was one of the brilliant group of women novelists (which includes Mrs. Flora Annie Steel

and Mrs. Penny) who have done so much to familiarise English readers with Anglo-Indian life. She lived for fourteen years in India and Burma where her husband, Lieut.-Colonel John Croker, of the Royal Scots and Royal Munster Fusiliers, was on service. Her latest book, "Odds and Ends," a collection of short stories, was published recently by Messrs. Hutchinson.

Miss Dorothy Brandon's picturesque romance of the twelfth century, "Beau Regard" (Andrew Melrose), was originally written as a play, and Miss Edith Goodall had arranged to produce it at a London theatre this autumn, but owing to the theatre famine it has been impossible to find a house for it. If, when it does appear, the play gets as good a reception as the novel is getting the author will have every reason to be gratified.

"Forward from Babylon," a new novel by Mr. Louis Golding, which Messrs. Christophers are publishing, presents an interesting picture of Manchester life, in vivid contrast to Captain A. E. Agate's brilliant "Responsibility." Mr. Golding is a poet of distinction, and Mr. Moult's assistant editor of *Voices*. "Forward from Babylon" shows him as the latest recruit to the Manchester Grammar School of novelists, in the line of succession to Mr. Gilbert Cannan and Mr. Harold Brighouse.

Captain Eric Reid, M.B.E., whose striking novel of life in Siam "Spears of Deliverance," Mr. Stanley Paul has published, is still a young man, though he writes out of the fullness of a varied experience acquired in the Far East and in Africa. He was born in Ceylon thirty-four years ago, educated at Aberdeen University and King's College, London, and speaks eight European and Oriental languages. He went to Siam in 1908 as a student interpreter, and before long became British Vice-Consul there, resigning that post, in 1912, to become editor of the *Siam Observer*. When the war broke out, most of his readers and subscribers being Germans, attempts were made to use the paper for purposes of German propaganda, and his successful resistance of these brought him three letters threatening his life, after which he worked on the Wild West plan, with a loaded revolver in the editorial drawer. Throughout the war he was on active service, first on the North-West frontier of India, and later in German East Africa. His earlier essays into authorship were "Chequered Leaves from Siam," published some years ago, and an amusing comedy, "The Haven of Peace," produced with success last year at Dar-es-Salaam.

Photo by Malcolm Arbuthnot. **Miss Dorothy Brandon.**

Miss Christine Chaundler has shown real and charming gifts as a writer of stories for children, and has written another and a very delightful one in "The Thirteenth Orphan," which has just been published by Messrs. Nisbet, with illustrations by Honor Appleton. Miss Chaundler was born at Biggleswade, and her understanding of children is explained by the fact that, the eldest of a large family, she was conscripted as story-teller in general

Mr. Louis Golding.

to all her younger sisters and brothers. At an early age she wrote little plays which were performed locally; then, after she had contributed fairy tales to the magazines, Miss Cecilia Brooks prompted her to write full-length stories, and she emerged as a writer of books. She was educated at Queen Anne's, Caversham, and St. Winifred's, Bangor, where she says she had her first taste of fame "as a writer of pretty bad verse" on topical subjects.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

Two books that you would do well to read in succession—because they deal with different sides of a subject about which so many intelligent men so profoundly disagree—are Mr. Coulson Kernahan's "Black Objects" (3s. net; R.T.S.) and Mr. David Gow's "Spiritualism: Its Ideas and Ideals" (2s. net; J. M. Watkins). Mr. Kernahan brings a very powerful indictment against spiritualism. He does not much concern himself with the frauds of dishonest mediums; his case is that the attempt to communicate with the dead is plainly and sternly forbidden by the scriptures; that it undermines the mental and moral stability of those who devote themselves to such practices; and that it is so opposed to all Christian teaching that its triumph must necessarily mean the subjugation of Christianity. He drives his points home not only with a passionate conviction but with a marshalling of evidence and a logical deduction from it that are not to be lightly put by. He takes the gloves off when he comes to handle the doctrines and statements of Sir A. Conan Doyle, Sir Oliver Lodge and other leaders of spiritualistic thought

Miss Christine Chaundler.

Captain Eric Reid, M.B.E.
(Military Division), Indian Army,
whose striking new novel, "Spears of Deliverance," has just been published by Mr. Stanley Paul.

and, even though you may think him at times too sweeping in his condemnations, his book is undoubtedly one to which serious consideration is due.

Mr. Gow is the editor of *Light* and an acknowledged authority on matters spiritualistic, and certain of the articles in his "Spiritualism" answer and seem to rebut some of Mr. Kernahan's accusations. To him spiritualism is "a magnificent philosophy"; he does not admit that mediumship is "unhealthy and unnatural," but argues that even if it were, "it is a thing we must go through with. It is 'the only way'"; for he holds the aim of spiritualism to be "to proclaim the proven and provable truth of the existence of an Unseen World of intelligent human life and the possibility of communication between that world and our own." That the quest is beset with danger is no reason, in his view, for abandoning it. Who shall decide when these doctors disagree? One can only commend both books and leave the reader to use his own judgment.

Sir George Greenwood is neither a Baconian nor an orthodox Shakespearean; he ploughs a lonelier furrow and is contented to hold that William of Stratford did not write the plays, and that the bard of Avon was no swan. In "Shakespeare's Law" (2s. 6d. net; Cecil Palmer) he apparently leaves this vexed question severely alone, but all who know his mind in these matters will suspect that he has an ulterior motive in seeking to establish that Shakespeare had a profound knowledge of the law. To tell the truth, the knowledge of the law exhibited in the plays, so far as Sir George discloses it, does not seem to be anything beyond the understanding of an intelligent layman of those times. It may look more difficult to us, because most of the legal terms used are now more or less obsolete. If the author of the plays could not have known such law as is in them without being a lawyer, he must have been too dull a dog ever to have written them at all. Professor Watson, in the current *Nineteenth Century*, offers as much evidence that Shakespeare began as a schoolmaster as Sir George can produce to prove that he was never educated.

THE READER.

A. E. HOUSMAN.

By John Freeman.

OF all contemporary English poets Mr. A. E. Housman is the simplest and the most inimitable. Cleverness may copy cleverness, subtlety simulate another subtlety, fantasy flatter fantasy; but the directness of the lyrics of "A Shropshire Lad,"* their truth of imagination, their honesty of phrase, cannot be borrowed for a moment without detection. Some have assumed the manner, some have confessed a debt by their titles, but in each case is the true attribution clear—"school of A. E. Housman." And "A Shropshire Lad" remains single and sufficient.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

A. E. Housman.

It is, of course, in one sense and avowedly a local poetry. But since Englishmen are not Englishmen in and for the sake of a particular county alone, this poetry has an acute interest not only for Shropshire men, but also for the larger multitude of others whose affection for that county may be based primarily upon nothing broader than an allusion in Milton's "Comus." Even Shropshire men may admire their great river a little more proudly for this allusion, to which A. E. Housman has added in repeated phrases. He indeed quickens the reader's memory of this river not merely by casual references, but also by evidence that his references spring deeply from his historic sense, as in "The Welsh Marches":

> "High the vanes of Shrewsbury gleam
> Islanded in Severn stream;
> The bridges from the steepled crest
> Cross the water east and west.
>
> * * * * *
>
> "When Severn down to Buildwas ran
> Coloured with the death of man,
> Couched upon her brother's grave
> The Saxon got me on the slave.
>
> "The sound of fight is silent long
> That began the ancient wrong;
> Long the voice of tears is still
> That wept of old the endless ill.
>
> "In my heart it has not died,
> The war that sleeps on Severn side;
> They cease not fighting, east and west,
> On the marches of my breast."

That grave sensitiveness to ancient and ever-living impressions is a characteristic of this true poet, who draws from the very names of remembered places—Bredon and Ludlow, Clee and Wrekin—the nourishment of his mind; those names hanging in his ear like a mother's diminutives in a grown man's. Hence a feeling of blessed intimacy grows and flowers amid these few-score lyrics, and penetrates the mind in the way of the simplest of precious things.

Tenderness, however, is far from being all, and indeed is scarcely predominant. Sometimes grimness appears as frankly as in Hardy's poems:

> "Lovers lying two by two
> Ask not whom they sleep beside,
> And the bridegroom all night through
> Never turns him to the bride."

Elsewhere—and quotation alone will show clearly the special character of this poetry—the same note of sharp reality is expressed:

> "And sure enough beneath the tree
> There walked another love with me,
> And overhead the aspen heaves
> Its rainy-sounding silver leaves;
> And I spell nothing in their stir,
> But now perhaps they speak to her,
> And plain for her to understand
> They talk about a time at hand
> When I shall sleep with clover clad.
> And she beside another lad."

It is not, in these lyrics, the violent disillusion of youth, but rather the steady perceptiveness of mature and tested manhood; not so much that something has disappeared, but that something has been gained. This steady, level view of life—of passionate, abundant life within a small radius—has the supreme virtue of truthfulness; fancy is not brought in to give a glamour that fidelity does not afford. A. E. Housman has found it easy to avoid a false romanticism.

It is in considering this fact that a further circumstance is quickly noticed—the moral interest of the book. Sensations here are related to conduct, acts to consequences, as sharply as in the external manifestations of life. The fifty-first lyric is a complete illustration, and spares me the awkwardness of paraphrase:

> "Loitering with a vacant eye
> Along the Grecian gallery,
> And brooding on my heavy ill,
> I met a statue standing still . . .

* "A Shropshire Lad." By A. E. Housman. (Grant Richards.)

Photo by Van der Weyde. **A. E. Housman, 1894.**
Kindly lent by Mr. Grant Richards.

"... He stood and eyed me hard,
An earnest and a grave regard:
'What, lad, drooping with your lot?
I too would be where I am not.
I too survey that endless line
Of men whose thoughts are not as mine.
Years, ere you stood up from rest,
On my neck the collar prest;
Years, when you lay down your ill,
I shall stand and bear it still.
Courage, lad, 'tis not for long;
Stand, quit you like stone, be strong.'
So I thought his look would say;
And light on me my trouble lay,
And I stept out in flesh and bone
Manful like the man of stone."

More deeply yet does the moral interest sink in the poem containing this exact and concise couplet:

"The mortal sickness of a mind
Too unhappy to be kind."

It is the very depth of sombre tragedy.

Other things remain to be noted; first, that A. E. Housman has renewed our ballad literature, as in the eighth lyric, with Maurice among the hay—"and my knife is in his side."

"My mother thinks us long away;
'Tis time the field were mown.
She had two sons at rising day,
To-night she'll be alone."

Secondly, he repeats the elegiac note, and repeats it supremely in the forty-sixth lyric, which it would be shameful to cut from. Lastly, he has the bright lyric felicity which preserves the work of so many English poets—a Herrick and a Marvell, a Wotton and a Beddoes—against corruption and oblivion. This stanza is famous:

"Wake: the silver dusk returning
Up the beach of darkness brims,
And the ship of sunrise burning
Strands upon the eastern rims."

Other readers will know other perfect stanzas and phrases; most readers will know dozens.

The renown of this poet is a singular thing. Nearly all those who love his poetry love it solely on account of "A Shropshire Lad," which is all that can be quoted from here. A smaller number will know their author as a scholar. That his contribution to English poetry should be confined to a single volume and such a rare later lyric as that which appeared in *The Times* during the war, concerning an army of mercenaries, is a subject of constant regret. But the regret for what we lack does not mar our thankfulness for what we have received from A. E. Housman.

A. E. Housman.
From a photograph taken by Mrs. Grant Richards in the summer of 1316, in Cornwall.
Kindly lent by Mr. Grant Richards.

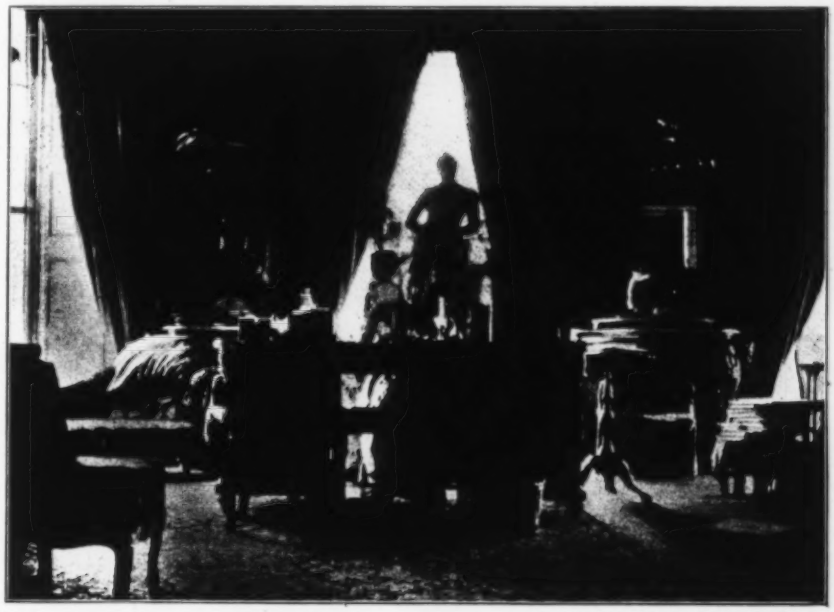
* * * * *

I ought in conclusion to say that many lovers of this poet must have thanked, silently or openly, the publisher of "A Shropshire Lad" who issued the book—how many years ago I cannot now remember, but my own copy was bought in 1904—at the price of 6d. Only English classics have ever been published in so cheap and charming a form.

LADY GREGORY.

By C. E. Lawrence.

THERE is a wonderful woman in Ireland, doing a work which has already spread geniality and ideals far over the English-speaking countries this side and that of the Atlantic. Gazing on a world in havoc, with its better aspirations endangered and the great requirements of duty, citizenship, brotherhood too often



Lady Gregory at home.

Seated at the table on which all her plays have been written, but by some irony of fate when Mr. G. Bernard Shaw took the above snap-shot she was writing a character for a kitchen-maid.

subject to the measures of the market-place, it is a joy to look towards Gort and see there a new lamp burning with a flame of inspiration fed with old visions, and to recognise that for this quickening which helps all who think with the English language, we have to thank Augusta Gregory, the Lady of Kiltartan. Nineteen years ago she edited a little book in which was expressed the ideal of "a new Ireland rising up out of the foundations of the old, with love and not hate as its inspiration." How necessary, and more than necessary, is that ideal now when the thick-head politicians are busily making there a wilderness!

The Lady of Kiltartan she may be called, because that Barony in County Galway has been the source and centre of her main inspiration. From the mouths of beggars, pipers, travelling men and such pleasant company, from the stone-breakers, drivers, herdsmen, fishermen, seaweed gatherers on the wild coast, from old remembering mouths in the workhouses, she has charmed much illuminated wisdom and many of the tales which make her Cuchulain cycle a fit and true shelf-comrade to the immortalities of Malory. It was with the heroic myths of Ireland that she effectually began her work, and a great beginning it has proved. That Cuchulain, Emer, Finn, Deirdre, Gormleith, Conchubar, Brian, Maeve, Aoife and the other mighty shadows of a wild dawn were not forgotten in print is true, for industrious scholars had been at work, translating and collecting versions, and many versions, of the thoughts and doings of the kings, warriors and witches, with their loves and hates, of the cloud-years before the records of history; but the songs and legends were scattered in serious papers and portentous volumes, often they were written in the catalogue-jargon of the schools; were indeed scientific treatises rather than human documents. Lady Gregory added her quota to the mass, and then she set to work, linking, co-ordinating, editing. imbuing the old tales with wit and imagination, and then telling them in the only language possible to their expression—Kiltartanese, a warm language, radiant with humour and vision, in which a natural homeliness was merged with a proud and simple dignity and poetry. Kiltartanese is a living discovery; through its familiar music the ancient heroes live and are convincing.

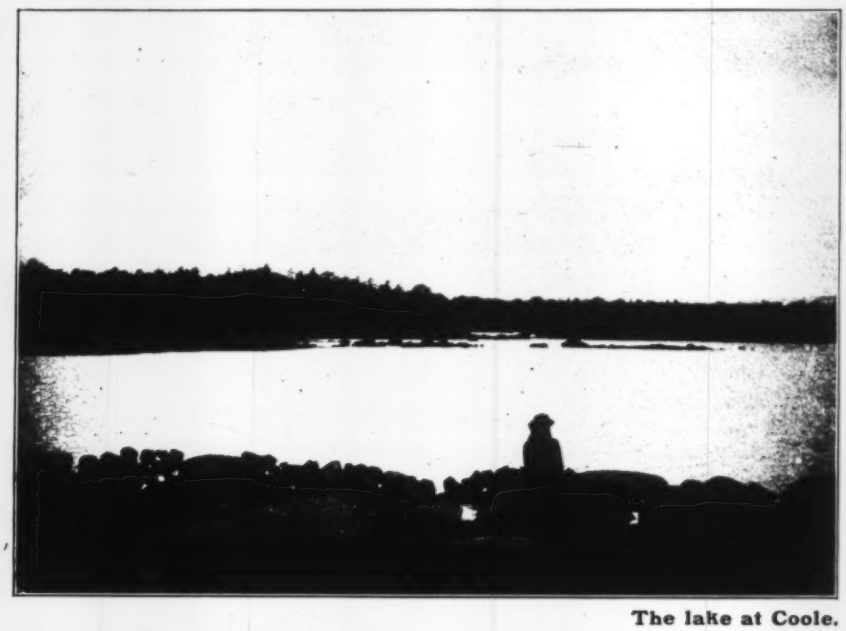
The cycle begins and ends in a period beyond that reached in the Morte d'Arthur, for it closes with the religious triumphs of Blessed Patrick of the Bells, while the super-titanic achievements of Cuchulain, that mighty hero of Ulster, were played out, fought out, in the earliest pagan times, on the immediate morrow of the coming of the Fianna, when there were amazons and it was no disgrace to a man to fight with a woman and slay her if he could. Witches weaved their spells and took on sudden disguises, the Sidhe rode on the winds, and the elements entered into the shapes of familiar things to overrule the destinies of mankind. A magic older than the enchantments of Merlin worked many wonders. Even the shields of the warriors sang or roared with triumph or rage. And the heroes fought. How they fought! It is a mighty and thrilling story Lady Gregory tells of the fight at the ford between

Lady Gregory.

Ferdiad and Cuchulain, "with the flames of the hero-light shining about his head." It was the final meeting of enemies who loved each other, and throughout acted with chivalry. But Maeve had wrought the harm. "My grief, it is hard to trust in women!" They fought for days from dawn of morning until fall of night, when they rested, kissed each other, gave each other food and drink and helped to the healing of one another's wounds; and then on the morrow renewed the fight with a growing fierceness and intensity:

"So close was the fight, that the Bocanachs and Bananachs and the witches of the valley screamed from the rims of their shields, and from the hilts of their swords, and from the handles of their spears. So close was the fight, that they drove the river out of its bed and out of its course, so that it might have been a place for a king or a queen to rest in, so that there was not a drop of water in it, unless it dropped into it by the trampling and the hewing the two champions made in the middle of the ford."

But at last the end must come. Ferdiad, with great strokes, forced his way through Cuchulain's guard and reddened the ford with his blood. Then, desperate, Cuchulain called to his charioteer, Laeg, for his famous spear, the Gae Bulg, and it was floated down the stream to him and he caught it with his foot . . . and so to the great end of Ferdiad. There is love as well as anger in these pages, with laughter and tears and the imaginative mourning of high souls. When Cuchulain, in his turn, had finished all his fighting and was just a man's body with a great memory and no more, his wife, Emer of the sweet words, bade them make a wide, very deep grave. She laid herself down beside her Cuchulain, put her mouth to his mouth, and said: "Love of my life, my friend, my sweetheart, my one choice of the men of the earth, many is the woman, wed or unwed, envied me till this day: and now I will not stay living after you." It would be so easy to continue a delight, culling the beauty of phrase and thought, of high emotion and chivalrous service, from these hero-books of "Cuchulain and Muirthemne," "Poets and Dreamers," "Gods and Fighting Men" and "Saints and Wonders," that we might never get to those other departments of Lady Gregory's literary gifts and labours of which there is call to speak.



The lake at Coole.

From a photograph by Mr. George Bernard Shaw. Mrs. Shaw is in foreground.

Conjoined with the great fables, merged with them in the same immortality of enduring memory, is the folk-lore from which she has taken and—faith!—has printed in the "Kiltartan History Book," "The Wonder Book," and some of her plays, stories, views and judgments of men and things, old, recent, new; all characteristic of their origin and touched with an inspired simplicity and a frequent incongruity which successfully overleaps the trammels of truth and art. They break the law and they keep it. The Kiltartan peasants from whom these words were taken have an intuitive consciousness of the essential unity of things. They know that the invisible is even truer than the evidence of our senses; and somehow, easily, reasonably, can rightly associate fairies and angels with railway-trains and, let us say, the boot-blacking. Nothing to them is vulgar—except vulgarity. Whatever tangible realities we may conjecture matter not a whit, for all are effects of eternity to Kiltartan, whose people see the soul of a thing rather than its surface, and correlate that soul with other spiritual aspects in an infinite community. It was not Maurice Maeterlinck who showed to them this wonder, which, also, was not hatched as recently as "The Blue Bird." The folk of Kiltartan are a people of unconscious paradox; they commingle shrewdness and other-worldliness in a manner that must baffle the unimaginative. "The History Book" is especially amusing and illuminating; with its gossipy quaint beliefs which never can die any more than, in the Kiltartan mind, Parnell can die or is dead; as surely, too, as Daniel O'Connell will live in the hearts of these faithful. "O'Connell's voice you could hear a mile off, and it sounded as if it was coming through honey." Time and again the great genial patriot, a man of helpful heart and hands, shines in this record. "O'Connell wore his hat in the House of Commons, what no man but the King can do. He wore it for three days because he had a sore head, and at the end of that they bade him put it off, and he said he would not, where he had worn it three days."

That Lady Gregory's investigations amongst the peasantry of the West of Ireland is no idle business but has a scientific value, is proved by two volumes of "Visions and Beliefs" (Putnams) recently published. From the eloquent mouths of ancient women and men—Mrs. Casey is the queen of the collection, a book might be made about Mrs. Casey—Lady Gregory has gathered

and written down views, inspired, on supernatural ways and things. Is it dream; is it truth seen through the inspiration of vision? Either, or both, or more! To these imaginative people the fairies —*They*—are actual. They ride and race horses out of the sea, enter houses to borrow (convey, the wise it call) milk and potatoes. Sometimes they reward with gold, true metal to the faithful believer; but to the incredulous or impatient it proves cow-dung. And when the young and the beautiful die, it is not death they partake of but a translated life. They have been taken by *Them* to live, labour and bring forth babies to the Fairy folk. Often in the shadowed sadness of the night the bereaved have seen the dead mother creep back to suckle with her ghostly breast the loved little one who remained when she was taken. This realisation of the unity of the unseen with the visible, of the spiritual with the bodily, alters with majesty the conception of existence. Immortality inherits a new meaning. Mortal ears are conscious of the echoing horns of Elfland. On the other side of the river of the soundest sleep is the reflex of this life with perhaps more humour, wisdom and brightness than are known to these gossips of the wilds and mists, the lakes and the mountains which Robert Gregory, who gave his life for duty, put upon canvas with heart and power and vision. The Banshee plays a less part in these narratives of the supernatural than might have been expected, and proves more definite than her convenient appearances in irresponsible fiction had promised. Often this terrifying foreteller of death was recognised as a country woman with a red petticoat, wielding an influence not only eerie, for, as a spinning woman records in these veracious pages, she was capable of giving "a slap on the jaw." The ease with which we Englis'i can misread the Irish mind is surely established by this book. A people blessed with a sixth — or is it a sixteenth? — sense of close and direct communication with the life invisible and of magic readily available to initiates, how can we measure them by rule of thumb or the textbooks of politics? As well weigh moonshine in a grocer's scales, or put off a moneylender with a book of sonnets. These important volumes of "Visions and Beliefs" are evidence of their author's versatility and industry, as also will be the forthcoming Life of Hugh Lane, her nephew, the "Image-Maker" who tried to give a tangible ideal to Ireland; and will yet.

Through her work for the Abbey Theatre, Lady Gregory has made her Kiltartan garnerings, of hero-legends and of simple folk-lore, especially practical. Not yet can the story of her service to the theatre, in and out of Dublin, be fully told, for it is still in the making and the growing. The idea of a National theatre in Ireland was not entirely hers. The thought had been shimmering in other minds, and those fine, unforgettable actors, the brothers Fay, had endeavoured transiently to make the movement march. However, Lady Gregory, whose imagination is linked with an excellent sense and a practical determination — she can, at once, see with the artist and hope with the box-office — made the possibility actual, a fact. She was helped with earnest lieutenants and good plays, poetical and farcical; but it was hard collar-work for the pioneers until Synge, the particular genius of the Abbey Theatre, came along and upset the conventions. There is no need at this thirteenth hour to tell of the rows in Ireland and America, foisted on "The Playboy of the Western World." Moreover, it is herself as a playwright that must here be thought of. Lady Gregory's work for the Irish theatre has been extensive and variable of kind and quality. It has passed the test of the footlights and is very good reading at home; and if every play, as with "The Image," has not entirely reached its author's aim, there are many that have absolutely hit the gold. For her work possesses the paramount vital essence—without which greatness is impossible; as with it all is possible—it has the essence of human sympathy, that touch of the eternal and divine, which is able in one eloquent pause or phrase to win the delight of laughter or the gentle touch of tears. The spirits of farce and comedy—Lady Gregory archly protests that all her comedy is regarded as farce—with the Muse of tragedy move about the stage of her imagining, to the loud mirth of "Spreading the News," "Hyacinth Halvey," "The Workhouse Ward," "The Jackdaw"; the humorous irony of "The Rising of the Moon," with its very excellent curtain, and the dark pathos of "The Gaol Gate." The historic plays touch deeper chords of passion and regret; while "The Canavans," "The White Cockade" and "The Deliverer" treat of periods in Irish history—the Jacobite, the Elizabethan—which have been curiously overlooked by the writers who hold their mirror up to nature and call its reflection the Drama.

So, in small measure, for the work; as for the woman, to know her is a joy and an inspiration. Witty and humorous, with a sympathy eager to find outlet in helpfulness, she makes friendship a possession richer than mines of gold. What she has done for Ireland—for England and America too—cannot be weighed or measured. It is as actual, yet as elusive, as sunshine or the happy visions of her own people. Sometimes we despair over Ireland; but we need not despair over Ireland so long as the happy, distressful country produces such as she—the gifted, gracious and ever-lovable Lady of Kiltartan.

Lady Gregory.
From the portrait by Gerald Kelly

XUM

POLITICAL PROFILES.*

By WALTER SICHEL.

MR. TAYLOR has written a very suggestive and amusing study. Taking some half a dozen typical English statesmen, from Cromwell onwards, he has essayed to show us what statesmen meant and what statesmanship means. His charm is his unconventionality and his power in profile. For none of his portraits are taken at full length or in full face. They are profiles artistically sketched with a background of learning and flashes of intuition. Down they tumble, the accepted idols, from their stereotyped shrines—all save Disraeli (who now can drag that genius down ?) and Robert Walpole, who here appears as the beau-ideal. Much that he has to say is both new and true, but a great deal else—must I say so ?—is the reverse. For his mastery of material is not supreme, and he proceeds on presumptions almost amounting to prejudices. For him a leading statesman is only the foam on an ocean, an emanation more than a pilot. Everybody is an expression of the nation's will. Only, since a nation is for him the " people " we are reduced to wondering what " the people " is. On his own showing it is something very constantly unpopular, and, while he rightly pronounces Cromwell to be an expression of the new moneyed interest, he belauds Walpole, who was that interest's triple extract, to the skies, and yet belittles both the Pitts, who stood for a commercial Empire, (and Walpole expressly disdained " the people ") to the deeps. According to his theory Napoleon, for example, could never have saved an anarchic France. Moreover, he is often unacquainted with the earlier conduct of his prodigies—notably in Walpole's case—though his faculty for " mile-stoning " his vignettes and showing them as branches of a family tree is perhaps the most original part of his achievement. None the less the work is far more than any fugitive fancy. He sees clearly and he writes as clearly as he feels. His English is lucid as well as lively, and he has made real contributions to true biography. His characterisations are certainly not mural and moral tablets.

Perhaps his Cromwell is the best. In his advent he discerns the turning-point when the Middle Ages were confronted by the middle classes. In Cromwell's autocracy, too, he notes a less disinterested repetition of Strafford's and he appreciates the past perspective of monarchy. When he notes that Cromwell was no " democrat " we are driven to ask what a " democrat " signifies. In the end—and the same applies to his disrelish of Burke—it usually means a capricious tyrant. Where Cromwell differs from the common despot such as Robespierre or Lenin is that he had large views and loved his country. He aired no allegiance to the universe and never acted on abstracts. But he was just as ambitious as the ungodly and the conventicle's cant sat ill on him. Mr. Taylor does not quote that letter of the Venetian ambassador which describes how he apologised for and dropped his Puritan language to a fifth-monarchy deputation. Nor does he—how should he ?—remember that penetrating criticism of his foreign policy by Bolingbroke who points out that never till the very close did he favour the true course of the moment—a Spanish alliance.

When we come to his Walpole space forbids us to detail the apparent delusions into which he has fallen. Walpole is his honest broker and Walpoleism—the statecraft of comfortable though bullying compromise—the golden mean. Golden it certainly was. Originative, imaginative, as our author seems to believe, never. Has he forgotten that during Anne's reign Walpole took bribes for his servants and cheerfully went to the Tower ? Has he forgotten that in 1731 he exceeded even his intelligible vindictiveness against the brilliant Bolingbroke by a charge which he must have known to be false ? Or how he blundered in foreign policy till—rightly or wrongly—a truly national ebullition drove him into war ? Has he forgotten that Disraeli himself stigmatised Walpole's excise as an " odious tax levied not only on the luxuries but the necessities of the people," or that " Sir Blue String voted against the repeal of the Schism Act because he wanted to conciliate the High Church." Robert Walpole was shrewd, steady, and full of common sense. He was not puzzled or ambiguous like Harley, but he lacked both vision and inspiration, nor can the common testimony of street-ballads be adduced on the one side without citing that of those on the other. As for Horace Walpole—so idealised by Mr. Taylor—he was a charming and witty *flâneur* with a pungent style that formed a sort of ornamental icing on the cake of Dr. Johnson's common sense. But he was no more " Ultimus Romanorum " than a master of the ceremonies is a hero. For all his talent he was ever the extreme pink of a *petit-maître*.

On the whole tribe of Pitts our author is as hard as he is gentle with all the Walpoles. As regards the supposed " Pilot that weathered the storm " in many respects to our thinking he hits the mark. But of Pitt the great he is far too censorious. Disraeli once said that Chatham resembled " a forest tree in a suburban garden." Every one knows the faults of the great man who pointed the way to colonial expansion—the continuation of Bolingbroke's fine dictum in the *Patriot King* that the Colonies should be Britain's farms. To dwell on Chatham's theatricality and acquisitiveness in some directions is to omit what raised him above the valets around him—his fire and formidable force. To single out his suppressed gout is to ignore the use he made of it. If he was loose in knowledge he was tense in action, and the penniless cornet of horse succeeded in stirring the national feeling by an intuition and resource that no schooling can engender. His attitudes appealed, and they focused public opinion. As regards his son Mr. Taylor might have added that it was Dundas who really screwed him to the sticking-point, but he has omitted the spell of youth in estimating his influence. Doubtless the Pitts were " out to get " and all of them started as Whigs. But they did not belong to the Revolution Families, nor were they accommodaters like the Walpoles. They may have been buccaneers but

* " Modern English Statesmen." By G. R. Stirling Taylor. 10s. 6d. net. (Allen & Unwin.)

they were not horse-copers. Nor do Mr. Taylor's strictures on "empire" seem to take account of the long race for sea-power between France and England. To Burke he shows little charity. No doubt there are many weak points in the armour of a sage who was a "Bedlamite," given over often to paroxysm though seldom to paradox. There was of course, too, sometimes a behind-the-scenes shiftiness about him. But why he should be denounced for grappling with a Jacobinism utterly repugnant to all the nation, save a clique of free-thinkers, who were freer than they were thinking, passes understanding. About Warren Hastings, about the India Bill, about most of the new Whig experiments he was wrong, but the scholar and political student who began by doing the thought for Rockingham was right surely in breaking away from and breaking up every abettor of disintegration and chaos. Fox was the naughty schoolboy whose dominie had been Burke, but Burke ended by flogging Fox and the "friends" of every country but their own. The French Revolution too favoured an octopus-centralisation fifty times more strangling than the French Monarchy's. *L'État, c'est nous.* Moreover, Burke's works will always abide as true interpreters of our old Constitution. He is its Justinian.

Mr. Taylor's "Disraeli" is in many ways perceptive, but not in all. He is puzzled by "duality." I have written so recently on this theme both in these columns and, at length, in the *Edinburgh Review* that I do not wish to repeat myself. If, however, Mr. Taylor will re-read "Alroy" and "Endymion," he will find something of this duality explained. Every one of us is "dual" or even triple, but most men are a compound of insignificants. Disraeli was both doer and dreamer. The dream often exceeded the deed because its realisation was prevented, but the deed often realised the dream. Take "Sybil" alone. Over twenty-three statutes of sane social improvement attest both action and attitude. Disraeli was a born romantic and in the best sense a born aristocrat. He himself has said that his leanings were more "popular" than democratic, and he has described "a pretentious, underbred, half-educated man with all the commonplaces of middle-class ambition which are humorously called democratic opinions." For what unreined Democracy, democracy as a class, means is difficult to define—"the rule of one class, and that the least enlightened." Was "Not this man, but Barabbas" "democratic"? And "Democrats" are usually second-hand—either doctrinaires or demagogues.

E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

By Brian Phillips.

WHEN a novelist has written fifty volumes he is commonly described as voluminous; but it is well to remember that fifty of to-day's novels would not, in average length, make twenty of yesterday's. It is more informing, then, to say that though Mr. Oppenheim has written much the public is still asking for more, and that though as an artist in sensation and mystery he has many rivals in modern fiction, he stands among them unrivalled. In any event, to start with a kind of prejudice against what the economists call excess of output is almost like begging the question. Quantity should help towards an estimate instead of hindering it. There must be special qualities in Mr. Oppenheim's books that have encouraged him to persist and beguiled the public into appreciation. He has been so long now in command of the lending libraries that he is not likely to be dispossessed during the present generation. He stands serene and undisturbed between the super-critics who scoff at fertility, and the bookstall acolytes who hail circulation and prosperity as the signal reward of still more signal merit. And somewhere with this miscellaneous triad, like the pea among the thimbles, hides the truth for all to seek. Let us consult the author first.

E. Phillips Oppenheim.

You soon learn from Mr. Oppenheim that he has no royal road to point out to the beginner, save perseverance and the old bombardment of editorial desks. He was eighteen when his first story appeared in print, and twenty when he published his first novel. Since then he has put in thirty years of writing fiction, and he confesses that its fascination comes as fresh as ever. "At fifty-three," he says, "I sit down to commence a new story with exactly the same thrill as at twenty. For every story has about it something new. The lure of creation never loses its hold. Personally, I cannot account for the fact." Then after describing his method, a rough division of his time into recreation and work—usually dictation to shorthand in summer and a typewriter in winter—he confesses a tolerable acquaintance of both sides of the Atlantic. But the verdict is that he could be perfectly content to spend the rest of

his days in London :—" Half a dozen thoroughfares and squares in London, a handful of restaurants, the people whom one meets in a single morning, are quite sufficient for the production of more and greater stories than I shall ever write. The real centres of interest in the world seem to me to be the places where human beings are gathered together more closely, because in such places the great struggle for existence, whatever shape it may take, must inevitably develop the whole capacity of man and strip him bare to the looker-on, even to nakedness. So the cities for me."

Fourteen of the novels that stand to Mr. Oppenheim's name all prophesied the war in one form or another, and wherever he finds admirers, they are certainly not in Germany. Friends who had long twitted him on this particular foible, declared when the war arrived that there would now be nothing for him to write about, but he ventures to take a very different view. " Now that the cataclysm is over," he says, " the stage is being set for even more tragic happenings. So long as the world lasts, its secret international history will combine to engage the full activities of the diplomatist and suggest the most fascinating of all material for the writing of fiction. Of actual story-writing during the war, I imagine that there was very little. We novelists went about our accustomed jobs, storing up ideas, and collecting material. There was one period, I remember, in the autumn of 1918, when a well-directed bomb upon the Ministry of Information might have cleared the way for the younger novelists, at the expense of Arnold Bennett, Buchan, Dion Calthrop, Temple Thurston, Hugh Walpole, and myself. To-day we are all back at our work, none the worse, perhaps, for the wonderful interregnum."

In another touch of confidence Mr. Oppenheim said : " I was born in 1866, married in the States twenty-five years ago, and have one daughter. My chief interests outside my work are the theatre, travel, sports and games of all sorts. I enjoy my country life by the sea (North Devon) and my club life in London, and the thing I like better than anything else in the world is writing stories." When asked what he thought of the future of fiction as affected by the film, he replied : " I am quite sure that fiction will survive the present conditions. The indulgence in fiction is a firmly established corollary to the daily life of all human beings. Stories were sought for and told by word of mouth (and paid for) two thousand years ago, and the reading of fiction still provides a most simple and natural exercise for the demands, subconscious perhaps but inevitable, of the imaginative side of human nature. The film has come into partnership with the presentation of fiction through print, but it can never become its rival. In these days of greater stress, the mind demands more relaxation and the film supplies it, but no pictorial representation of a story will ever take the place of the written lines to the confirmed novel reader."

That point of balanced interest between the two sides of the Atlantic suggested another query. One has heard people on this side say Mr. Oppenheim was born in America, but people on the other side admit no doubt at all about his being English. This doubt of where he belongs reminds one of the seven cities that disputed about the birth of Homer! But at any rate, it is worth while quoting what our author has to say about this inter-continental sympathy, especially as it may clear up some misapprehension as to what raises or removes the barrier between the two audiences, English and American : " Stories that are freed from local conditions, which place in the forefront the primal forces of life, command exactly the same attention from English as American readers. Why not? I have been in America a good deal, although I live in England, and I have never found any difference in the manner of thought or the ideals between the men and women of the two countries. They want the same thing out of life and they go the same way about it, and, provided your canvas is broad enough, you can appeal equally to New York or London. Think of the greatest of our English story-tellers—Conrad."

Mr. Oppenheim can certainly invoke the war in justification of the many warnings he has hurled upon us. Whether he chose the best audiences for awaking to the facts, or how far he set those facts in the proper light, offers room for conjecture. What is certain is that he long ago created a kind of barrage or smoke-screen of his own where the wily Boche lives and moves and has his being in a hundred different shapes. His chief handicap is that there are only two sexes ; otherwise the duplicity of the Hun might have been multiplied to infinity and beyond.

Some will tell you that " The Wicked Marquis," one of the least sensational, is the cleverest and most delightful of his novels ; but you may take up any of them—" The Plunderers," " Mr. Lessingham Goes Home," " The Strange Case of Mr. Jocelyn Thew "—in the certainty of finding excellent entertainment. Once you are under his spell you have no desire but to read on and see him unravel his mystery, for Mr. Oppenheim has the wizard gift of so subduing you to his imaginings that you no more question the probability of his highly ingenious plots than the spellbound wedding guest could think of doubting the veracity of the Ancient Mariner.

" The Great Impersonation," his latest novel, is a commanding piece of work. It has the element of Teuton treachery, the manorial family veiled in mystery, and the inquisitorial spies Mr. Oppenheim has used to subtle purposes in other of his novels. But once you accept these conventions of his and, in this case, the speaking likeness to each other of the two adventurers, there is no end to the fascination with which you watch the tale develop. After marvelling for many chapters how a German baron could be such a finished master of colloquial English, and so successfully step into his victim's shoes, it turns out we were all wrong. We ought to have been wondering how an Englishman could enter the confidence of the All-Highest and his gang, and convince them he was the baron. It is all delectably mystifying till you arrive at the solution ; and the avenues of print are lined with the fabulous beings that Mr. Oppenheim has invented and mated or martyred to make a reader's holiday. All this by way of showing the mountains of difficulty he sets before himself, and how easily he surmounts them.

He is to be congratulated in that, much as he has written, his new book is a real advance on anything else

he has done. He retains to the full the power of telling a rattling story. He has beguiled many a tedious hour with his racy and varied inventions, and his hand is so far from losing its cunning that what remains to be emphasised above everything is that he performs his inventive wonders with a new finish, coolness and dexterity. He is far and away our most accomplished master in the type of sensation story he has made his own.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

NOVEMBER, 1920.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II., IV. and V. are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best reply, in not more than three hundred words, to the question: If it were possible for you to spend an evening with any famous author of the past, which one would you rather meet, and why?

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR OCTOBER.

I.—The Prize of ONE GUINEA for the best original lyric is awarded to S. M. Isaacson, of 16, Lexham Gardens, W.8, for the following:

NOVEMBER 11TH, 1920.

Lest we forget! Indignant, we deny
So vile a charge, too shameful to endure:
Yet in our hearts, are we in very truth
So sure?

We do forget sometimes; for life is hard,
And sordid cares and standards which defile
Make us lose sight of those fair things that are
Worth while.

Dare we forget, who through Their sacrifice
Alive, unscathed, in this dear land remain,
Freely inheriting the peace they died
To gain?

Can we forget? Not those from whom are fled
All joy and sunshine, from each day its mirth,
Wanting the voice they will not hear again
On earth.

When we forget—not willingly, God knows,
But in the turmoil of life's headlong flight,
May He in mercy keep the knowledge from
Their sight.

We also select for printing:

THE COTTAGE OF MY DREAMS.

Far on the distant height there gleams
The Little Cottage of My Dreams,
Swept round by mighty seas of Pain,
And when the last sad wave has rolled,
When you are old and I am old
There we shall meet again.

The seeds we sowed in bitter tears
Shall blossom in those later years
And all the hedges shall be set
With Peace and Charity and Truth—
Fruition of our vanished youth—
But, Heart, shall we forget

The sorrows of the way we trod,
The pain that led us back to God,
The griefs that made us wise?
When Time has taught me how to live,
And God has taught you to forgive,
The Gates of Paradise

Shall roll apart, and we shall find
That all the joys we left behind
Have blossomed just beyond our sight.
For as we trod the paths of pain
God gathered in our whitening grain,
And as, athwart the night,

We come to meet Him, side by side,
Like little children, shorn of pride,
When all our loneliness is past,
And humbly ask to be forgiven,
Then shall we find the Gates of Heaven
Roll back for us at last,

And, lighted by Eternal Beams,
We'll find the Cottage of My Dreams
Where all our sins and sorrows cease.
There shall we find the hopes we knew,
There shall our fancies all come true,
And Pain shall bloom in Peace.

(Lucy Malleson, 25, Auriol Road, W.14.)

HELEN.

Low o'er the silver mirror on her knees
Fair Helen drooped, and in its breath-dimmed lake
Saw her white beauty smeared and blurred and dull,
And spoke, her voice all shaken then and full
Of fierce, swift-leaping fear: "How shall it be
With Helen when this firm and radiant flesh
Is quenched and sodden as dead lotus bloom,
And this gold hair that winds men in its mesh
Is dank and sad as rain-swept olive trees,
And this gay mouth, whose smile proud thrones can shake,
Is ripe no more for kisses, mirth or wine,
Or shaped an arch for stream of song divine,
But sagged and broken, mumbling of the tomb?"
Then Paris, shocked with pity, answered,
His burning gaze upon her cameo face . . .
"While plum-blue nights shall lock in mystery
The eternal secrets of thy night-deep eyes,
While moons shall bare their whiteness to the skies,
While song and flight of birds hold still their grace,
And poppies, redd'ning, startle the close-ranked grain
So far less golden than thy web of hair—
So long thy loveliness shall weave its snare,

Each day, each season, thou shalt live again,
With every springtime shalt transcend the tomb
To brush with deathless lips the orchards' bloom.
. . . While these things linger, Helen triumphant be,
Since with such wonders none may match save thee."

(Diana Patrick, Woodstock Cottage, Wallingford-on-Thames, Berks.)

We select for special commendation the lyrics by Helen Mitcham (Limehouse), K. E. Douglas (Ipswich), Claude Sterne (Streatham), Leslie M. Priest (Norwich), Faith Hearn (Florence), Laurence Groom (London, N.W.), M. C. Smith (Bournemouth), Winnifred Tasker (Llandudno), M. Mitchell (Edinburgh), Ivan Adair (Dublin), Pauline Clough Young (Claygate), Violet D. Chapman (Bath), M. B. (Calne), Muriel Grainger (Hampstead), Eileen Newton (Whitby), Jack Albyn Goad (London, W.), J. A. B. (Highgate Hill), Edward Stone (West Hartlepool), Angela W. Williams (Maidstone), Kersasp H. Kanga (Bombay), Phyllis Erica Noble (London, E.), C. A. Macartney (Paris), Wilfred W. Kershaw (Paris), C. Burton (Upper Norwood), V. D. Goodwin (Gillingham), Una Malleson (London, W.), Ethel M. Hewitt (Streatham), P. E. Ballantyne (Southbourne West), Freda Isobel Noble (London, E.), P. H. Lulham (Brighton), Ethel Burney (Hampstead), A. Eleanor Pinnington (Exeter), Doreen Hateley (Walsall), Angela Cave (Bournemouth), L. Yarde Bunyard (Allington), Ruth Bevan (Bude), Mary E. Steel (Darlington), Vera I. Arlett (Worthing), John Dronsfield (Prestwich), H. Drury (Streatham), Muriel (St. Leonards-on-Sea), R. Wintour (Maidstone), Joan Calder (Battersea Park), Gwladys V. Smallpeice (Felsted), Mary F. E. Cotter (Boscombe), Lorna Keeling Collard (Wincanton), N. R. Saker (Wood Green), Leslie D. Cockerill (Forest Gate), J. R. Wilmot (Birkenhead), L. Scott Stevens (Bournemouth), F. E. Fleming (Shrewsbury), D. A. Pattinson (Northallerton), Delphine Stringer (London, S.W.), A. W. Wall (Nottingham), J. R. McCallum (Birmingham), Edward D. Lacy; E. A. Jenkins (Pontypridd), David Thomson (Oxford).

II.—The Prize of HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to the Rev. Edwin C. Lansdown, 11, Guildford Road, Tunbridge Wells, for the following:

THE LAPSE OF THE BISHOP. By GUY THORNE. (Ward, Lock.)

"Reclined in the gutter we found him."
BARHAM, *Not a sous had he got.*

We also select for printing:

THE FORBIDDEN TRAIL. By HONORÉ WILLSIE. (Butterworth.)

"It followed her to school one day,
It was against the rule."
WORDSWORTH.

(Arthur Pollard, 134, Manchester Road, Accrington.)

EXTERIOR TO THE EVIDENCE. By J. S. FLETCHER. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

"The flowers that bloom in the spring, tra-la,
Have nothing to do with the case."
W. S. GILBERT.

(J. H. Price, 2, Middle Temple Lane, Temple, E.C.4.)

"PUSSYFOOT" JOHNSON. By F. A. MACKENZIE. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

"A grave, steady man not addicted to grog."
"THE BAGMAN'S DOG."—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

(Annie A. Robinson, 3, Penn Lea Road, Weston, Bath.)

A CRY OF YOUTH. By CYNTHIA LOMBARD. (Appleton.)

"Come into the garden, Maud."
TENNYSON.

(G. Gardner, 9, Chislehurst Avenue, North Finchley, N.12.)

III.—THE PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS for the best quotation suitable for placing over the entrance to a Free Library is awarded to Sidney S. Wright, of 12, Swanley Lane, Swanley, Kent, for the following:

"Books are the true levellers. They give to all who will faithfully use them, the society, the spiritual presence, of the best and greatest of our race."—W. CHANNING.

The replies received have been numerous and varied (though certain very familiar passages have each been chosen by a score or so of competitors), and we select for special commendation those sent by W. H. Porter (London, S.W.), Margaret Nora Lilley (Leicester), P. J. Thomas (Oxford), W. Crampton (Stretford), E. G. Horner (Surbiton), Constance Tidman (Erith), Sidney Anderson (West Didsbury), Dorothy Cooke (Reading), M. C. Stanley (Sale), J. R. Sisson (Wallasey), Helen Auxilium Bruce (Sunningdale), Agnes Knight Cross (Bangor), Norman H. Jones (Birmingham), Louie H. Freeman (West Southbourne), T. Jones (Colwyn Bay), E. L. Fayster (Croydon), H. G. Walker (Manchester), Alice Greenwood (Maida Vale), Mrs. Gun (London, W.), Mrs. R. Mair (Guildford), Hilda Fletcher (Highgate), E. E. Wood (London, S.E.), J. S. Smith (Nottingham), Eileen Earle (Birmingham), Ernest A. Fuller (Greenwich), May W. Harrison (Lincoln), Kate Johnson (Bradford), Gwendoline W. Bowes (Rishton), K. Harvey (Oundle), Edith M. Dean (Clare), E. J. Corke (Halifax), Doris Amy Ibbotson (Newport, I.O.W.), M. Whitaker (Barnsley), Alfred O. George (Allerford), Mabel E. Dronsfield (Prestwich), Mrs. Sybilla Kirkland Vesey (Glenfarg).

IV.—THE PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review is awarded to B. Noël Saxelby, of 43, Claude Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, for the following:

TENSION. By E. M. DELAFIELD. (Hutchinson.)

Miss Delafield is a clever satirist. In "Tension" she gives us a devastatingly true portrait of a certain type of woman. Lady Rossiter's pose of universal loving-kindness is so assiduously cultivated that it even deceives herself: under its cloak she contrives to stir up the staff of the local commercial college until the tension thus created reaches snapping point. Her husband, disillusioned and cynical, successfully concealing his few remaining ideals, is perhaps the most convincing figure in the book. But the lesser characters, from the flighty authoress of "Why, Ben!" to that amiable egotist Mr. Cooper, are amusingly drawn.

We also select for printing:

NOTES ON A CELLAR-BOOK. By GEORGE SAINTSBURY. (Macmillan.)

This book resembles very much that with which it is chiefly concerned—good wine. It is mellow; it is very good; it soothes; and the wit sparkles continually through it. Mr. Saintsbury has done many things and has apparently drunk many fine wines. He leaves an excellent and memorable record for coming generations, and we think that a no more subtle blow than this book could have been dealt at prohibition. Of course it will appeal only to a limited circle, but to those few there is indeed a treat in store, and our thanks are due to Mr. Saintsbury.

(C. Dawson, junr., Llandudno, North Wales.)

THE MUSIC OF WILD FLOWERS.

By JOHN VAUGHAN, M.A. (Elkin Mathews.)

It is an astonishing but wholly veracious statement that, in the midst of all that is sordid and materialistic in to-day's life, the attraction of wild flowers, with all their fascination as well as variety, was never so keen or so widespread. Perhaps it is the Nature Study lessons of the elementary school, perhaps the opportunities which have been given

for holidays and travelling into the "free" gardens of the earth—the appreciation has come. Therefore this book will find its market. It is vivid and full of life, easily readable, full of new and yet containing the old things.
(A. E. Gowers, 12, Broad Street, Haverhill, Suffolk.)

We also specially commend the reviews sent by Viola Bankes (London, W.), G. Ralton Barnard (York), A. M. Count (King's Lynn), Vincent Hamson (Luton), L. Mugford (London, S.W.), Maude R. Fleeson (Withington), Sidney Anderson (West Didsbury), W. Swayne Little; M. C. Smyth (Bournemouth), T. Owl (Southport), Robert C. Bodker (Streatham Hill), Winifred M. Davies (Brynmawr), Emma Burgess (Douglas), Lucy Chamberlain (Llandudno), Sidney S. Wright (Swanley), Queenie Scott Hopper (Whitley Bay), H. M. Creswell Payne (Newquay), Gwendoline W. Bowes (Blackburn), Edward D. Lacy (Manchester), O. M. Baker (Warwick), Dorothy Hurst (Wolverhampton), E. A. Douglas (London, S.W.).

V.—THE PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN is awarded to M. E. Dronsfield, of 23, Sedgley Avenue, Prestwich, Lancs.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARGOT ASQUITH.*

BY STEPHEN MCKENNA.

MODERN literary criticism is too often stultified by the obstinate determination of the critic to have a book written in his own way or not at all. Sympathy with the author's method is no more common than understanding of the author's design. The reception which has been accorded, during the last few months, to the serial extracts from her autobiography must have given Mrs. Asquith a foretaste of the reception which will be accorded to the complete book; and it cannot be said that much understanding or sympathy has informed the judgment of public and private critics. Egotism, bad taste and want of restraint have been brought as charges against the author of a book which bears on its title page the motto, "Prudence is a rich, ugly old maid wooed by incapacity."

In the preface the authoress admits frankly "my only literary asset is natural directness." Not only in literature but in life this natural directness, evident on every page of her autobiography, is the explanation and key of Mrs. Asquith's temperament. In a character-sketch of herself she says: "I think I am deficient in one form of imagination. . . . I have a great longing to help those I love, which leads me to intrepid personal criticism; and I do not always know what hurts my friends' feelings. . . ." But, if her directness has invited criticism and brought her enmities, it has brought her also, by the score, friendships of which any woman might be proud to possess a single one. The summary of her life, drawn up in 1906, records "An unfettered childhood and triumphant youth; a lot of love-making and a little abuse; a little fame and more abuse; a real man and great happiness; the love of children and seventh heaven." And the record is rounded by the aspiration: "an early death and a crowded memorial service."

It is necessary to understand Mrs. Asquith's attitude to life before attempting to judge the book in which she sets forth passages of her own life with a candour for which she has already been attacked and will, no doubt, be attacked again. As companion to the motto already quoted she could have added the famous and favourite sentiment: "They say. What say they? Let them say"; as commentary on the critics who gave her "a little abuse" and then "more abuse" she may take credit for refraining from any assault on those who have fought her politically or traduced her privately. The autobiography is the statement of a woman who from her "unfettered childhood" has loved and practised "natural directness."

This attitude once realised, it is easier to understand the inclusion of certain material which has offended her critics, for they and she will ever be divided over the problem what must inevitably be included in any biography and what must no less inevitably be

Margot Tennant, aged 20.
From "The Autobiography of Margot Asquith" (Thornton Butterworth).

* "The Autobiography of Margot Asquith." 25s. net. (Thornton Butterworth.)

excluded from all; she has been taken to task for admitting the world to the death-bedside of a sister whom she loved, though this leave-taking has already been described for all the world to read; she has been attacked for making public, in her own lifetime, a love-affair, but she may well retort that an autobiography which omits all reference to it is no autobiography. She must write the book her own way; and, if "natural directness" be her "only literary asset," the book could have been written in no other way.

That this is too modest an estimate of her literary powers is proved on every page. There is wit, perception, vitality, a sense of the dramatic, a firm clarity of outline and a delightful neatness of finish: the account of her first meeting with the Duke of Beaufort is inimitable, and it is to be regretted that she uses her great gifts for description so sparingly, for, though there is admirable portrait painting, there are too few of these *tableaux*. To many readers, one picture of this kind is worth many pages of old letters and of dialogue less vital.

In her selection and arrangement of material Mrs. Asquith is not so successful. When Mr. Balfour was told by some one who had seen him in her company: "I hear you are going to marry Margot Tennant," he replied: "No, that is not so. I rather think of having a career of my own." Though Mrs. Asquith is one of those to whom inevitably a high career would come unsought, her burning interest in everything great and small that concerns herself and her friends occasionally distorts her perspective and leads her to publish letters, conversations, description and judgments that, in the opinion of many, can have but little importance for the general public to whom this autobiography is addressed. Not only is Mrs. Asquith "the most brilliant hostess," as Shane Leslie judged her in "The End of a Chapter," not only has she enjoyed "a triumphant youth"; she was for nearly ten years the wife of a prime minister and has been the mother and stepmother of the most brilliant family in England. Some of us would gladly exchange her memories of early days in Scotland for a more generous contribution to later politics; the "love-making" might well have been sacrificed to a little history. And here all critics must agree that the title does little justice to the book or to its author: "The Autobiography of Margot Asquith" ends with her marriage, and the history of her life in Downing Street from 1907 to 1916 is left untouched. This, it is understood, will be described in a later volume, though the present one does not say so; and the reader, unwarned, may cry in his haste that the autobiography of a prime minister's wife reads frivolously if an embargo is placed on politics.

While it is reasonable enough for politics to be postponed, it is not so easy to find a reason for Mrs. Asquith's general lack of arrangement. She would be the first to regard herself as an amateur, and her autobiography was written under grave disadvantage of time, but her inexperience of construction leads sometimes to woeful confusion. Chapter VIII opens with a character study of the authoress in 1888 and passes by way of a letter from Jowett and a projected paper to a discursus on friendship and a list of the people who, twenty-eight years later, provided roofs for the family when Mr. Asquith left Downing Street at ten days' notice. A tribute to Lady Wemyss prepares the way for the conversation, correspondence and delineation of Jowett. This chapter has been chosen at random; wherever the book is opened, there is the same difficulty in discovering whither, in chronology, geography or subject, Mrs. Asquith has darted. For casual reminiscences this may be well enough, but that which proclaims itself an autobiography demands architectural proportion and arrangement. Were the authoress insensible to form, this shortcoming might be pardoned as a thing inevitable and incurable, but her descriptions—at their best—reveal an instinctive feeling for form.

At the end of her first meeting with the Duke of Beaufort, who promised her the coveted blue habit hitherto reserved for women who owned coverts, Mrs. Asquith asked: "Do you always do this sort of thing when you meet anyone like me for the first time?" The Duke replied, "with a smile, lifting his hat": "Just as it is the first time you have ever hunted, so it is the first time I have ever met anyone like you." This is the first time that any one has met a book like "The Autobiography of Margot Asquith." It cannot be judged adequately until the second volume has appeared, for to many readers the political history will be more engrossing than this personal record of much that is important only to Mrs. Asquith. Within her present limits she has put forth a book which is as well-written as it is ill-arranged: the sketches of her "triumphant youth" are matchless, her pictures of Gladstone, Jowett, Alfred Lyttelton, Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Lord Rosebery and Mr. Balfour are an important contribution to the understanding of these men, there are new letters and poems never before published, and at last we have an account of "The Souls" from their most inspiring and one of their most famous members. All who stand outside that celebrated gathering will wish that this, the first true account of it, had been longer; but, as many of the members are alive and in exalted public positions, a fuller history may have been impracticable. For all her candour, for all the glowing light of personality under which nothing about herself remains trivial or begins to be irrelevant, Mrs. Asquith has only disappointment for those who hunt for indiscretions.

Many readers of this outspoken book will be surprised by the words, "I shrank then, as I do now, from exposing the secrets and sensations of life. Reticence should guard the soul and only those who have compassion should be admitted to the shrine"; but the parodist who made Mrs. Asquith say: "Reticence! What words you use!" must give her high credit for the dignity of her occasional silences. She alludes, indeed, to the fanatics who, in the heart of the Home Rule controversy, tried to cut her; but for the less frank enemies who intrigued her husband out of office, for the hysterical mob who called her pro-German and for the people of "low intelligence and high credulity" who screamed obscenities at her in law court and press, she has no attention to spare. In this generation no woman has been so foully and cruelly attacked; in no generation has the attack been met with such silent and dignified contempt.

New Books.

EDUCATION FOR EVER.

Professional lecturers sometimes concern themselves about what they call the Span of Education. There is little difficulty about the beginning. The cradle forms a comfortable starting point—though enthusiasts would go still farther back and accept Froebel's suggestion of the Annunciation. At the upper limit, twenty-four to twenty-five years of age appears to commend itself as a suitable time to leave off formal education. But social reformers are not content with this, and seem to be harbouring the fatiguing conception that education ought to go on from the cradle to the grave. They speak of the common fallacy that education belongs only to the earlier years, and Mr. Cranage makes our blood run cold with the assertion that he has "known excellent students over 70 years of age." Naturally the word *education* may be used in widely different senses, and it is obvious that in the book before us* adult education begins just where the "young person" ceases to be technically entitled to be so called. It has the peculiarity of not being an entirely isolated work but a sort of commentary on or exposition of the Report of the Committee on Adult Education. Some of the contributors were themselves members of the committee, and all of them because of their special experience are entitled to speak with authority on the subject. Probably they are right in supposing that a bound book will attract more readers than a Government Report, even though that report is legibly labelled Cd. 321, 1919. But while they believe that they are able to make the presentation more effective than a Blue Book can, the contributors recognise that the report itself must be read. One of them in fact finishes his article by telling us that he wishes us to learn from the Interim and Final Reports of the Adult Education Committee rather "than to expect in this place an endless catolugue thereof." But why "catolugue"?

Report and book alike appear to be based on the assumption that "in all adults there is a capacity for continued education of a high order, granted the right method of approach": so the greater part of the book is devoted to finding and describing this approach. Perhaps the authors do not clearly enough realise that the many agencies they describe—extension lectures, tutorial classes, reading circles, mechanics' institutes, Sunday schools, adult schools, labour colleges—are all closely related to the disadvantageous circumstances of certain social groups, and that age limits are necessarily influenced by this fact. Further, it is doubtful whether culture can be kept separate from the circumstances under which it is acquired. Mr. Greenwood tells us that "the problem is not how to get the articulate workers to absorb the culture of a higher social class, but how to enable them to evolve a culture of their own." This is wholly admirable, but I have searched in vain throughout the volume for traces of an attempt to apply the principle laid down. The culture after which labour is striving more or less intelligently will no doubt differ from the conventional culture of to-day. But in the meantime labour is too much concerned with the economic struggle to have time for much development in other directions. It would be unfair to say that labour's use of education will be "tendencious and biased," but it cannot be denied that labour, like every other class of the community, tends to use education to further social and other ends that are not quite disinterested. It is therefore a little doubtful whether the Report is right in its recommendation that "the State should not refuse financial support to institutions, colleges and classes merely on the ground that they have a particular 'atmosphere' or appeal specially to students of a particular type. All that it ought to ask is that they be concerned with serious study." On the whole, the writers in this book support the recommendation, and they are able to point to certain almost parallel cases in which bias is not barred from Treasury support. But certainly more guarantees must be provided before the principle should be extended. As a matter of fact, however, so long as the voluntary system is so highly esteemed by the educational representatives of labour, there will be little danger of unfair subsidising of propaganda. The writers in this volume are firmly convinced that only by voluntary effort can adult education be carried on successfully. This does not mean that government grants with a reasonable amount of consequent supervision are to be refused. But we are told that the moment a system becomes highly organised in detail, the life goes out of adult education. Mr. Mansbridge indeed makes the very unexpected point that the more complete organisation of education in Scotland has proved a hindrance not a help to adult education there. "Even mechanics' institutes, though founded in Scotland one hundred years ago, achieved more power south of the Tweed than north of it."

In a very sympathetic chapter Mrs. Huws Davies deals with the place of women in adult education, and says some rather surprising things, not the least startling of which is that one of the chief objections to men and women studying together is "that women never get a word in." The University Extension Movement is thoroughly well treated both historically and critically: and the book closes with "A Student's Experience," in which an elderly student gives an account of the extension system as it strikes the working-class student. In spite of its somewhat ecstatic style it supplies a creditable specimen of the results produced by this form of teaching.

JOHN ADAMS.

* "Cambridge Essays on Adult Education." Edited by R. St. John Parry. 12s. 6d. net. (Cambridge University Press.)

LITTLE TREASURE ISLAND.*

That Mr. Arthur Mee has the rare gift of understanding children, of knowing how to appeal to their imaginations and their hearts, the enormous success of *My Magazine* and *The Children's Newspaper*, which he founded and edits, bears unimpeachable witness; and in "Little Treasure

* "Little Treasure Island: Her Story and Her Glory." By Arthur Mee. Illustrated in colour and monochrome. 10s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Arthur Mee.**

Island" he has made excellent use of that gift to turn history—the history of our own country from its beginnings down to the present day—into stories that younger readers will find as fascinating as any fictitious romance that was ever written for them. Facts are only dead when they are handled by a dull man; Mr. Mee shows them in action with all the life and interest that belong to them, and is able to do so simply and easily because he is himself so obviously and keenly interested in them. He has not only learned that

> "... truth in closest words may fail,
> But truth embodied in a tale
> Shall enter in at lowly doors"—

he has learned also how to embody it in such fashion that wherever it enters in it will carry pleasure and its own welcome with it.

Here you have history with no smack of the school about it; no dreary marshalling of dates and cataloguing of kings and tuneless rattling of the dry bones of incident and event; Mr. Mee loves England and rejoices in her, and the events and the men he selects to write about are such as matter and have real significance in any story of her greatness. "The Tale the River Tells" takes you a twenty-mile walk along the banks of the Darent in Kent and unfolds with a panoramic, swiftly-changing vividness and colour the motley life that has flowed down the valley by the riverside from the earliest recorded time—how the men of the Ages of Stone and Bronze were followed by the soldiers of Rome, by Danes, Saxons, Normans, warring or at peace, and how from all these mingling races the modern English have evolved. A chapter on "How they Brought the Good News" tells of the dawn of Christianity in Britain and grows into the beautiful story of the Venerable Bede. There are glamorous chapters on the world-old wonders enshrined in London's museums; on Raleigh, on Shakespeare, and how much of its glory our Empire owes to them; and, coming to our own era, there is "The Very Heart of the Island," to explain something of the workings of the Government offices in Whitehall, and a series of graphic and often poignant sketches of divers phases of the vast war from which we have just emerged.

But Mr. Mee is too true a patriot to be a blind one and does not shrink from showing other sides of the picture. It is well that those who will be the men and women of the future should read his passionate denunciation of the cruel and stupid greed that inspired our business men of the near past to enslave the children and drive little ones of four years and upwards to toil in their mines and factories so that they might have cheap labour and larger profits, for you may depend it is the memory of these things that underlies much of the labour unrest and rebellion that the whole community is suffering from now. It is a good lesson to enforce—we are paying to-day for the wrongs our fathers did, and to-morrow our children will have to pay for any that we are doing.

But though, as Mr. Mee says, "it is not true that there has never been a stain upon our flag," it is true that "in all the strivings and yearnings of multitudes of men it has been on the side of everlasting light. In the coming up of the world from barbarism to civilisation it has been on the side of humanity," and he justifies that claim in the stories of his book—a live book, and one so deftly done that it makes knowledge as entertaining as a fairy tale and will be read by children for the sheer delight of reading.

THE ARBUTHNOT FAMILY.*

The Scots are well known to be very partial to an ell of genealogy, and so the numerous members and connections of the notable family of Arbuthnot should welcome this excellent and detailed chronicle of their clan. The author is Sassenach, it is true, and merely an Arbuthnot by marriage; but she was born an Evelyn of Wotton, and gives valid reasons for undertaking the record of a Scotch family:

> "She had the good fortune to grow up in a house whose proudest possessions were its Stuart relics, and such influences are apt to turn one's thoughts early in the direction of Scotland, as to a spiritual home, which, in the long, expectant hours of childhood, lay mysteriously beyond the boundaries of the known and the actual."

It will be surmised that Mrs. Arbuthnot is an ardent Jacobite, as befits the chronicler of a family who consistently supported, and suffered for, their legitimate kings in the eighteenth century. She recovers the Lost Cause by the light of wan romance, and pleasant, indeed, to the reader it is to wander again in that brave land of long ago, and forget for a time the present horrors of Soviets and Direct Actions and Big Threes.

The Arbuthnots descend from Hugo de Swinton, who in the twelfth century acquired the lands of Aberbothenoth, which became the patronymic of the family. A later Hugh, known as "Le Blond," was the hero of Scott's ballad of the falsely-accused Queen of Scotland, and the slayer of the Dragon of Pitcarles. Yet another Hugh Arbuthnot has a ghastly story darkening his memory. It is said that he and his followers, desiring to placate the Regent Albany, in 1420 seized John Melville, Sheriff of the Mearns, at a hunting party in Garvock. They cast the victim into a huge cauldron and, bringing him to the boil, each consumed a portion of the hellish broth.

To come down to more recent generations of the family, one of the most notable members was Charles Arbuthnot who, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was British Ambassador to Turkey. The war with France caused trouble in 1805, and Arbuthnot left his post and joined the small English fleet which was lying off Tenedos. With it he participated in that gallant forcing of the Dardanelles, which was certainly a great feat in view of the difficulties the English Navy experienced in the same place over a century later.

The second wife of Charles Arbuthnot, the Ambassador, was Harriet Fane, the lady who dominated so completely the Duke of Wellington, and who was the confidante of his most secret political plans. It was apparently an intellectual friendship only, though Society regarded the Duke as Mrs. Arbuthnot's special property, and she herself termed him "my legitimate property." Her husband was perfectly contented and evinced no jealousy. He was, in fact, Wellington's most valued man friend. The trio were constantly together, and the only unhappy person was the Duchess of Wellington, who was unwanted and slighted in her own homes. She was undoubtedly very badly treated by her husband. The poor, meek Duchess gave up the contest in 1831, and died. Her brilliant and successful rival followed her to the grave three years later. The two widowers lived on alone together to extreme old age. Charles Arbuthnot died at Apsley House in 1850. It is a strange story, as strange almost as Nelson's relations with Emma and Sir William Hamilton.

Mrs. Arbuthnot provides a real, pulsating, human drama when her book records the amazing case of Miss Eleanor Arbuthnot, whom John Carden, of Barnane Castle, Tipperary, attempted to abduct by force in 1854. He was a rejected suitor, and endeavoured to seize the young lady one Sunday when she was driving home to Rathronan. Two of her sisters and a governess were also in the carriage. A most terrific struggle took place, the governess waging a very pugnacious part—striking Carden violently and repeatedly in the face, which was covered with blood. Irish retainers of both parties rushed up and joined eagerly in the fray. Carden's attempt was frustrated and he fled. At once he was pursued and captured. He was tried, and condemned to two years' hard labour, and he served his full term of imprisonment. But public sympathy was with him, and the Irish ladies sighed for such a gallant and determined lover. The cold-blooded heroine of the story never married, and in later life was devoted to good works, which perhaps were her penance for the passionate and melodramatic experiences which had marked her youth.

* "Memories of the Arbuthnots of Kincardineshire and Aberdeenshire." By Mrs. P. S.-M. Arbuthnot. With 25 pages of Illustrations. 63s. net. (Allen & Unwin.)

XUM

In recent years the family has been worthily upheld by Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Arbuthnot, who perished with his ship, the *Defence*, at the Battle of Jutland; Brigadier-General Sir Dalrymple Arbuthnot, and many others. This family record is a credit to its subject, as well as to the author and publishers.

S. M. ELLIS.

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURER.*

So long ago as 1878 Professor Thorold Rogers stated that the agricultural labourer possessed five or six more qualifications to the title of skilled worker than did the artisan. Forty years later the House of Commons was startled by the equally true, if ironically made, statement of a member that it was more difficult to replace a skilled carter than a cabinet minister. Yet, after all these years, in spite of the lessons learned from (or, rather, taught by, for they apparently have not been learned) the experiences of the war, we are still content to treat Hodge with rather less respect than we show towards the beasts that he tends. In a vague way we all realise, of course, that the agricultural labourer is still scandalously ill-paid and overworked. But we need the relentless facts so ably marshalled by Mr. F. E. Green in this excellent book to bring home to us the real depths of our national shame.

Now what are these facts? Let us go back fifty years. From 1853 to 1862 the average weekly wage for an agricultural labourer in England and Wales ranged from 9s. 11d. to 11s. 1d., whilst the average price of wheat per imperial quarter was from 53s. 3d. to 55s. 5d. No wonder Mr. Prothero called this period the "Golden Age of English agriculture." The farmers and landowners would no doubt agree with him; as for the labourer—but he always found a grave somewhere when worked to death. These are, however, figures only of the labourers' wage; what did they mean in food? The usual food was potatoes, dry bread, greens, herbs, kettle-broth, weak tea, and sometimes a little bacon. There was no meat except on Sundays. Kettle-broth consisted of bread soaked in hot water, seasoned with a pinch of salt, perhaps an onion or a spoonful of milk, and this "seems to have been the common food in the southern counties." As for the styes misnamed cottages in which the workers were housed, let Cobden speak:

> "At Stourpaine, in Dorset, one bedroom in a cottage contained three beds, occupied by eleven people of all ages and both sexes, with no curtain or partition whatever. At Milton Abbas, on the average of the last census there were thirty-six persons in each house, and so crowded were they that cottagers with a desire for decency would combine and place all the males in one cottage and all the females in another."

Thus it was their collective will, comments Mr. Green, which protected them from moral degradation.

It was to alter such conditions that Cobden thundered forth his living words. Later, in the early seventies, Joseph Arch took up the task. He organised the half-starved country labourers and declared war on the farmers and landowners. Some town workers and a few newspapers helped him; but against him were the almost solid ranks of that rural trinity of oppression—the squirearchy, the clergy, and the farming class. Though Arch had one or two initial successes, he was soon countered. Indeed, for a generation the agricultural worker's condition improved but little. Now there are signs of new life. Trade unionism has taken firm root. The young men have come out of the Army with broader views and squarer shoulders. They are dreaming of better things, discussing and organising. But they will have a hard row to hoe yet. The old spirit of slave-driving is not dead in rural England; still, the labourer's power grows. How it grows and how it will be wielded a perusal of this invaluable book will show.

R. K.

* "A History of the English Agricultural Labourer, 1870–1920." By F. E. Green. 16s. net. (King.)

Mr. W. H. Davies, 1920.

A portrait by Laura Knight.

From "The Song of Life, and Other Poems," by W. H. Davies (Fifield).

W. H. DAVIES'S POEMS.*

Probably none of our Georgian poets is likelier than Mr. W. H. Davies to survive the century. He is far from faultless; several surpass him in technique and delicacy of finish; but almost alone among them he has the spontaneity which is beyond art and that indefinable quality which we loosely describe as genius. Most of his distinguished contemporaries have talents that are well under control, but he is the irresponsible servant of his gift; they have an aggressively modern air, but he has his roots in the past and the best of his poems are as fresh as this year's roses, and as old-fashioned. He is curiously personal, but never self-conscious; you do not feel that he has cast about for a theme and then sedulously hammered it into rhyme with the scholar's knowledge of the rules of the game. He does not so much seem to go after his subject as to take it as it comes to him; any passing sight or casual fancy serves his turn, and the perfect simplicity of it is matched with as careless a simplicity of expression. This latest book of his is as characteristic of him as his first. If he is starkly and gruesomely realistic at times, as in "The Rat," he can put the quietest charm of poetry into such a lyric as "Bird and Brook":

> "My song, that's bird-like in its kind,
> Is in the mind,
> Love—in the mind;
> And in my season I am moved
> No more or less from being loved;
> No woman's love has power to bring
> My song back when I cease to sing;
> Nor can she, when my season's strong,
> Prevent my mind from song.
>
> "But where I feel your woman's part
> Is in the heart,
> Love—in the heart;
> For when that bird of mine broods long,
> And I'd be sad without my song,
> Your love then makes my heart a brook

* "A Song of Life, and Other Poems." By W. H. Davies. With a frontispiece from a portrait by Laura Knight. 5s. net. (Fifield.)

XUM

That dreams in many a quiet nook
And makes a steady, murmuring sound
Of joy the whole year round."

The very inequalities and occasional infelicities of such verse as Mr. Davies's are inseparable from the magic of it; they accentuate its unpremeditated naturalness. He is like a man who talks unreservedly and unaffectedly of whatever he happens to think and feel; so doing he inevitably says some commonplace things in a commonplace way, and the beauty of his song is that its perfections flow from it as easily and are as native to it as its imperfections. It was the same with Herrick and with Blake, and if one were to venture upon prophecy it would be to say that his place in the poetical hierarchy will not be far below theirs.

BEERBOHM TREE.*

Receiving their plaudits at once, often in inordinate measure, while still the curtain is raised on the scene of their rehearsed endeavours, actors—puppets of this wooden O—are rapidly forgotten when the play is done. Artists who create are lucky if they get the reward of applause at any time; but with the actor it is here and now; thunders, clapping of hands, paragraphs, photographs, the easy adoration of the many. And then, some shuffling of the scene and—farewell King! The shining phantoms of the limited, limelit hours have become phantoms fading, gone. Biographies of actors, as a rule, because of this rapidity of eclipse, make dismal reading. The turning of the pages is so like the disinterring of rose-leaves, wrapped in press cuttings of extravagance.

Tree was so well-known and recent a producer and player that this book should have better fortune than most of the kind. Its plan is excellent, and the choice of the "inimitable Max" for pilot of the team of eleven contributors is of the nature of an inspiration. Unfortunately, there is not enough of him. With his inside family knowledge and many years of attendance as a critic at the theatres, he should have expanded his sixteen pages to many more; while Lady Tree, whose pleasantly intimate contribution occupies more than half the book, might well have omitted the expression of opinions; for, as with so many other leading ladies of the profession, the critical note is lost in dizzy ecstasy. Roses and pearls are cast with spendthrift hands. She can hardly mention a play, player or performance, without adjectival extravagance; and as few of us did not witness some of Tree's productions, it is possible to check these enthusiasms, and know that many do not hold good.

Sir Herbert was a man of eager and bold conceptions; but often their realisation was beyond his grasp. Even his happiest and most successful endeavours were marred by blots of bathos or misjudgment. Henry Irving, from whom so much of his inspiration was inherited, could not have outdone the taste and beauty of some of Tree's productions and scenes; yet in the very heart of the poetry the wrong note was sometimes struck with a blatancy intolerable. The antics with the turnip-head ghost in the beautiful "Twelfth Night"; some of the dull buffoonery in "Much Ado," the intrusion of the mannikin It in the revival of "The Darling of the Gods," the return of Sir Peter Teazle to dance in the minuet after he had left the scandalmongers in disgust—such were frequent faults which marred the illusion it is the province of the actor to produce.

It would, however, be wrong not to recognise Tree's merits in certain respects. He was a very great showman; lavish, daring, constantly wooing the manifold tastes of the public with a pleasant variety. The success with which he filled the colossal His Majesty's is at once a tribute of praise and of condemnation. His own art grew attenuate there. His best personal triumphs were gained on the small Haymarket stage; and no one who saw his Paul Demetrius in "The Red Lamp" would give a fig, by comparison, for his Benedick, Ulysses, Shylock or Macbeth. At the same time even the vast stage of His Majesty's, which destroyed the essential subtlety, could not prevent his scoring splendidly as Caliban and Falstaff, parts unforgettable to those who witnessed them—and that, when the plaudits are ended, is the best immortality an actor can hope for.

For the man, the tributes of his friends are enough; and they loved him. Plenty of stories are going the round (they do not appear in this book) which show him on occasion tart of tongue and not suffering bores and fools as gladly as those fools and bores could have wished. But a man must be measured by the warmer standards, and we know that Herbert Tree to many was lovable. Of his wit this book has ample testimony. His epigrams have salt enough to bear a frequent reading; and sometimes they were spontaneous—"Of all the arts love is the greatest." "Flattery gives us winged feet." "To sacrifice an epigram on the altar of tact is the last martyrdom of man." "Epitaph for atheist, '*j'y suis, j'y reste.*'" "He is an old bore; even the grave yawns for him." "Cynicism is the humour of hatred"—and so on; variegated illustrations of a clever and happy mind. His work in America for England during the war was that of a patriot. This volume, his literary monument, in which Mr. Bernard Shaw's acid tribute is especially delightful, makes a convenient record of one—of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy—who according to his lights served the public generously and gladly.

C. E. L.

* "Herbert Beerbohm Tree: Some Memories of Him and of His Art." Collected by Max Beerbohm. 21s. net. (Hutchinson.)

A TRAGIC MASTERPIECE.*

The saying that love is blind is only very partially, if at all, true. That love seems blind to the faults of the beloved may be but a seeming, after all. That it is more wideawake to the virtues of the beloved, virtues that the mere outsider overlooks or disparages, is perhaps indisputable. And this wideawakeness is surely enlightening rather than blinding. "I can't make out what she sees in the fellow," we remark. And of course we can't. But if he were in love with us, and we with him, we should both reveal more of our best selves to one another, and thus get to know one another better than anyone else knows us.

I fancy that this idea underlies the theme of Mrs. Dawson-Scott's new novel. I have read it twice. My first hasty reading left me with an impression that it was mainly a study in degeneracy; my second more deliberate and considered reading, that it is a study in regeneracy, and that its final conclusions are resolved in the alembic of love.

The central figure of the story is the girl Roma. It is through her eyes that we see what passes during the three days in which the whole action of the story takes place. She is already unknowingly in love with the young, strong, clean peasant-farmer, Tavis Hawke, who tells her bluntly, "You feel alive, but you aren't." And at once the flickering light of love in her is kindled to a bright flame in the light of this man's love. Even yet, however, she does not understand. But her vision is clearing. She is beginning to wonder, to ponder. Very soon she is beginning to discover that there are things and beings in this world outside her average commonplace experience: beings hardly human, who do things that are worse than bestial. Beings of perverted instincts whose sole joy in life is the gratification of vile impulses so unnatural as hardly to be described as passions or even lusts. Sexless, sterile beings. The broken-down old man, Llyr Pendragon, alone shows lingering traces of a vanished vigour in insensate outbursts of rage and violence. His son Hendre, whom Roma in her simplicity is willing to marry until she learns the revolting truth about him, and the girl Clarice, daughter of another of the old man's degenerate sons: these two are alike crafty and subtle, loving the darkness rather than the light because their deeds are evil.

* "The Headland." By C. A. Dawson-Scott. 9s. (Heinemann.)

Only a great artist in literature could have triumphed over the difficulties of a theme which must have devolved, in any less sure hands, into ghastly farce. It is Mrs. Dawson-Scott's supreme sense of proportion and balance, her delicate handling of light and shade, her force and her reticence, and above all her essential sanity, that go to make of this book such a memorable achievement.

It is not a book for those who funk both life and death. It is a strong, brave book for men and women.

EDWIN PUGH.

MARK TWAIN'S LETTERS.*

"I love to think of the great and god-like Clemens," Kipling wrote to Mr. F. N. Doubleday, the American publisher, in 1903. "He is the biggest man you have on your side of the water by a damn sight, and don't you forget it. Cervantes was a relation of his." Perhaps there may now seem a little extravagance in that eulogy, but few of us would have thought so in the days when it was written. A new generation has risen and set up new idols, and the old are not what they were. Even we who were nearing middle-age in his later years, when his fame was at its height, find the laugh gone out of much of Mark's humour, and that there are not more than two or three of his many books that we can re-read to-day with the delight and admiration they moved us to at first. But this was to have been expected. As Mark Twain says in one of his letters, neither Dickens nor Scott means the same to us at fifty as he meant to us when we were young and less critical: "Nothing remains the same. When a man goes back to look at the house of his childhood it has always shrunk."

But if most of his books have shrunk, or seem to have shrunk, the man himself has undergone no real diminution. The spell of his personality is as potent as ever, and you cannot read these letters without realising the charm and bigness of it and feeling all your old allegiance to him renewed. There is a more natural whimsicality, a mellower humour in the things he wrote to his friends than in much that used to tickle us in his professedly funny books; there is something wonderfully poignant or lovable in the wistful tenderness or quaint playfulness of whatever he writes to his wife and children or about them; the shrewdest common sense underlying his droll or tolerant or bitter commentary on life and the ways of men, and an uncompromising outspokenness in all his judgments, literary and otherwise. Some of his best letters were to W. D. Howells and, though he did not praise even him indiscriminately, his admiration for Howell's work matched his glowing affection for the author. "If your genuine stories can die," he wrote, "I wonder by what right old Walter Scott's artificialities shall continue to live."

Scott, however, never appealed to him. In a letter to Brander Matthews he puts a dozen devastating questions, beginning, "Are there in Sir Walter Scott's novels passages done in good English—English which is neither slovenly nor involved?" and goes on, "Brander, I lie here dying, slowly dying under the blight of Sir Walter. I have read the first volume of 'Rob Roy,' and as far as chapter XIX of 'Guy Mannering,' and I can no longer hold my head up nor take any nourishment. Lord, it's all so juvenile! so artificial, so shoddy; and such wax figures and skeletons and spectres. Interest? Why, it is impossible to feel an interest in these bloodless shams, these milk-and-water humbugs. . . ." But he persevered with his reading and a few days later wrote again saying he had passed from "Guy Mannering" to "Quentin Durward," and "it was like leaving the dead to mingle with the living: it was like withdrawing from the infant class in the College of Journalism to sit under the lectures in English literature in Columbia University," and then, having been forced to praise, adds, "I wonder who wrote 'Quentin Durward'?"

* "Letters of Mark Twain." Edited by Albert Bigelow Paine. Illustrated. 18s. net. (Chatto & Windus.)

Mark Twain.

From "The Letters of Mark Twain" (Chatto & Windus).

Whether he is right or wrong in such judgments is of no moment; what holds you in the letters is their amazing vitality; he interests you because he is so intensely interested in himself and everything about him. With Mr. Bigelow Paine's admirable prefatory sketch and connecting notes throughout they make the most intimate, enjoyable and enduring biography of Mark Twain that has been or is ever likely to be written.

THE LOOKER-ON.*

It is the fate of the philosophic temperament that it too often paralyses action: its interests are so many, its perceptions so quick that he who is blessed with it spends his days in comment and criticism rather than in creative work. He suffers from a content of the spirit and a discontent of the mind: he will question the arrangement of the universe and the plans of reformers, but he rarely thinks of applying his disturbing standard to his breakfast or his income. Mr. Mallock's natural tendency to a great degree of intellectual criticism and a rather complacent satisfaction with the world—a pleasant if narrow one—of gentlemanly society was not noticeably affected by his education either at Oxford or at his private tutor's. He is even now unconscious of how much he missed in the world with which he was most familiar. He was most familiar with its comfort and its beauty, and he dislikes the thought of admitting that there was anything which should make uneasy those who enjoyed that comfort and that beauty. He is quite sure that in his childhood, in the forties and fifties, there was no distress among the agricultural labourers in Devonshire, there was "no hint . . . of any distress temper which was calculated to provoke protests of any sort or kind against the established order."

"Memories of Life and Literature." By W. H. Mallock. (Chapman & Hall.)

He believes he was right in thinking that the "rural counties of England" were "the scenes of an idyllic and almost undisturbed content." Well, the opinion of one Charles Kingsley, also not unfamiliar with the West of England, was scarcely in accordance with Mr. Mallock's: and I would suggest that, in so far as the peasants were content, their idyllic peacefulness was not unconnected with the savage cruelty of legislation such as the Game Laws, and also with the recollections of the fate that overtook the first effort to form a rural trade union in the neighbouring county of Dorset. It was natural that the peasant hesitated before effectively expressing his grievances, when that expression entailed transportation for seven years.

It may seem ungracious to begin one's review of an entertaining book with this note of criticism, only I believe that no one can properly appreciate Mr. Mallock's keen resourcefulness as a critic unless he is aware of the blind spot in him. Temperamentally Mr. Mallock is unable to believe in forms of discontent and revolution which threaten his accustomed world; and when he has proved, as he has so often done, that such forms of revolution—whether in economics, in theology or in politics—are illogical, he proceeds to behave as though they had had no existence. He is continually, in all his books, overestimating the power of pure logic and underestimating the power of passion, of revolt, and of that common sense which refuses to be satisfied with statistics when it needs bread. This Mr. Mallock is only interesting as a survival. He represents a society which had distinction, beauty and dignity—distinction purchased by others' humiliation, beauty acquired by a steady ignoring of prevalent sordidness, and dignity held only by a denial of humour. It is significant that in this long book, dealing very amply with Mr. Mallock's economic writings, there is no mention of a little tract, a corrosive, definitive little tract called "Socialism and Superior Brains," written by a certain George Bernard Shaw.

There is, however, another Mr. Mallock—a Mr. Mallock whose wit very nearly achieves wisdom, whose sense of pathos at times gets near poetry, and whose zeal for Toryism approaches the dignity which attaches to Jacobitism. Mr. Mallock's theological work there is no need to discuss. It is the work of an outsider. What Pio Nono once said of Pusey is far truer of Mr. Mallock, but he is like a bell which rings people into church but remains outside himself. The aspects of Mr. Mallock which are valuable are those which are illustrated in his early books, "The New Republic" and "The New Paul and Virginia," and by his novels in so far as they contain critical comment on society. Mr. Mallock belonged by birth to the squirearchy; he moved in the small world of London society, and remembers the days when it was as hard to get into Claridge's as into Boodle's or Brook's. Of that old world he gives us a picture, drawn with skill and affection. His description of Denbury Manor in the days of his great aunt, Miss Margaret Froude, is a little masterpiece of etching, from the beginning with its recollections of Walpole and Wyat (the bad Wyat of Salisbury Cathedral notoriety), to its suave ending, descriptive of the old eighteenth-century furnishings which

> "... were there, not as survivals of the past, but as parts of a past which for the inmates had never ceased to be present. They were there as the natural appurtenances of a lady who, so far as I knew, had never been near a railway till a special train was run to convey mourners to her funeral."

Mr. Mallock was at no public school, but at Balliol, *regnante* Jowett, he was one of the best-known undergraduates. There he began to apply his quick and critical mind to the efforts of the liberal to reduce Christianity to a system which would enable dons to enjoy, without believing it. The result of that application is to be found in two books which still are readable. "The New Republic," modelled, he tells us, on "The Republic of Plato, the Satyricon of Petronius Arbiter and the so-called novels of Peacock," was an amazingly successful effort to reproduce, with just the least touch of caricature, the opinions of Jowett, Huxley, Tyndall, Matthew Arnold, Pater, W. K. Clifford and Ruskin, who alone among them all commanded Mr. Mallock's sincere and whole-hearted admiration. The book is in literature something akin to what Max's caricatures are in art: it is a *tour de force*, which Mr. Mallock has never again equalled, and its success, although partly one of scandal—all the men I have named are introduced under the thinnest of disguises—was thoroughly deserved on the book's merits. The success of the book secured for Mr. Mallock a great welcome when he came to London. He saw and met "everybody."

There are many good stories in the earlier chapters of the book, but in later ones Mr. Mallock deals a little too exhaustively with his own works, giving an analysis of some of his novels. His position as a novelist is not easy to define. He has connections with the pure society novel of Disraeli; but his best work shows more interest in abstract thought than is displayed in Disraeli's. He never attains the sober competence of Mrs. Ward, nor the bright, challenging audacity of Hugh Benson; and he unfortunately forsook the short, light form of his early books for a heavier and more morose style.

Mr. Mallock's book leaves the reader with the impression of an artist who has been diverted from his proper work. That work was satire; but something in Mr. Mallock's character—something entirely creditable to him—prevented him from being contented with satire. There is in him something of that spirit which Kipling describes; something of the modern disease which Ibsen pictured in his great canvas of Rome in Julian's time. He doubts his doubt: he is neither sceptic nor believer, and all his later writings are coloured with a certain hesitation not of the mind, but of the spirit, which renders them strangely irrelevant.

R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

AN APOLOGY FOR NOVELISTS.

A certain publisher is now sending out cards with the question: why do you read novels? But far more to the purpose would be the inquiry: why do you write them? For a good many people who ought to have examined themselves on this point have apparently neglected to deal with it, judging by the floods of worthless stuff now pouring from the press. These novels are indeed a challenge to an honest writer who, as a novelist, would fain think he is supplying something that serves a good purpose, other than the one of merely paying his expenses. For if his work is foolish and undelightful, the novelist does not justify his existence even if his sales run into millions. Before the bar of honesty it is not enough for him to say, "The public swallow my rubbish greedily." A novel is a piece of service only if it gives the world something beautiful; or, on a lesser level, if it opens the sympathies to an unfamiliar chapter of life; or again, if it is calculated to take one away for a time to a better world than that circle of mean cares which draws lines on almost all the middle-aged faces one meets to-day. This third head is obviously the most misleading one, for there are a thousand ways of amusing the silly—by making them sillier than they were before; worst of all, there is the way of amusement followed by the mere purveyor of "risky" stuff.

The books on the list under review * are in themselves examples of the classes here described. For "A Tale That Is Told" has the mellow autumn beauty that at times reminds one of Gissing's "Henry Ryecroft" in its tone; "Catherine Herself" is a queer "case," and a most unusual one, of the interaction of a strong nature on a weak one; "A Girl For Sale" has a measure of fun about it, especially for the tired or mentally enfeebled, and "The Passionate Spectator" is a story that disguises the true quality of the dish by its highly-flavoured seasoning.

* "A Tale that is Told." By Frederick Niven. 9s. net. (Collins.)—"Catherine Herself." By James Hilton. 8s. net. (Unwin).—"A Girl for Sale." By Mabel Barnes-Grundy. 8s. 6d. net. (Hutchinson.)—"The Passionate Spectator." By Jane Burr. 6s. net. (Duckworth.)

Mr. Niven alternates in his writing between adventure tales and the leisurely, old-world Scotch atmosphere where he is so much at home. "A Tale That Is Told" is finely written in the meticulous style suited to its supposed narrator, a dealer in rare editions in Glasgow. As such it has time for the most delicate effects in humour, in character and scene. As a family study of dignified Scotch life in the section of society where "divines" practise oratory and the art of making the best of both worlds, it is quite a beautiful piece of work. The vigorous portrait of the Rev. Thomas Grey, D.D., is worthy in its humour and truth of a place beside the old men in Stevenson's portrait gallery. Dr. Grey, though just on the safe side of humbug, is lovable in every inch of him. And if the other folks, his children and his wife with the alabaster effect, are less striking, it is simply because they are in themselves among the crowd of more shadowy characters who actually make up the vast majority of the human race. There is a sorrowful truth in this story of the generations that pass, of the benediction their dignity even communicates to old walls and gardens, which makes one think better of all life since it can produce anything so pleasant. Mr. Niven amply justifies his existence as a novelist, for he possesses humour, insight and a gift of form in construction which is quite delightful in days when the "slice of life" is apt to be but raggedly hacked off the romance writer's loaf.

"Catherine Herself" is a very surprising first novel, one that is actually capable of giving a shock to a woman reader, so remarkable is the knowledge displayed by its author, who, we are told, is a young man of eighteen. Yet the knowledge shown is of the character of a woman! And, although there are certain weak points where the illusion fails once or twice, the whole is original, suggestive and full of intuitive perception. The subject is the tale of a girl's life, a girl of the lower middle class who is keyed up to energy, ambition and self-control by a man of character who, unknown to himself and to her, actually galvanises her into a display of power entirely foreign to her real nature. When he drops her in self-defence, or in selfishness, she reverts to her natural state of slack inertia and satisfaction with the third-rate. One pays this young writer the high compliment of asking oneself: is this true psychology? Is it possible that some of the displays of artistry we perceive on the stage and elsewhere are the results of another's suggestion? There is in "Catherine Herself" no Svengali business, no claptrap, but all is told in a manner that is simple, direct and excellent. This is a novel that holds the attention because it is a good story as well as a very interesting essay in the psychology of suggestion.

Of Mabel Barnes-Grundy's novels over half a million have been sold. The reason for this is a fact in the mentality of the young girl. For the success, which started with "Hilary On Her Own," rests on the recipe used in the composition of all these tales. In this the centre is almost always a young girl who is just as charming and amusing as every girl would like to think herself. She is forced, like thousands of girls, to get her living in the rough-and-tumble of to-day. She gets it in the original ways that every girl would so gladly discover for herself did the structure of the world give her the chance, as unfortunately it does not. After funny straits, the Barnes-Grundy heroine, in which all these thousands of other girls see themselves, always comes up smiling with the right man at the end of her cute little fishing-rod. This is exactly the sort of position in which nine out of ten girls would like to imagine themselves—if only they possessed the necessary invention. Failing this, they buy a Barnes-Grundy novel and enjoy the delight of seeing themselves the centre of the kind of "stage" they can understand. And all this without the mental energy required to invent it. It is this fact that makes such stories mentally enfeebling. In the old days a girl learnt some sort of mental facility from having to dream her own dreams, as a child learns invention by making his own toys, or a man braces himself by playing football and not by looking on. Now, after Caxton's

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XUM

unfortunate invention, the principle "Every girl her own dreamer" is no longer honoured. It is a pity.

In the "Passionate Spectator" the idea developed is that with full freedom women will take up the position supposed to be claimed by the majority of men in regard to love and marriage. There will then be one moral standard for men and women; but it will be the low standard of the man, not the ideal standard the woman has tried to defend for so many centuries. Not only will marriage be repudiated freely, but even within it other adventures will be sought by women, sometimes openly, sometimes secretly. It is assumed that this will lead to joy, to greater health and happiness. The scene of the sketch is fixed in middle-class life in America, and the heroine passes from one fever fit to another, ultimately setting out to practise deception on her husband in a way that was very well known in the past, but is here, for the purpose of the argument, assumed to be highly original. The book is monotonous in incident and stiff and wooden in characterisation. It is also an instance of feeble thought. "He made me understand that sex adventure was only one of the million adventures that men have. Women, poor dears, know only the one." And this is the fact that utterly condemns the theory at the back of "The Passionate Spectator." For the woman here pictured is a being incapable of any other adventure than the one of sex, except that once, by an amazing effort of daring, she goes off on a week's walking tour. Her brains being drowned in a sea of emotionalism, there is nothing she is fit for save the everlasting monotony of sickly indulgence. For her there are no great adventures, no worlds to conquer, no science, art or politics to follow. But for men there have always been these worlds, and that is why, as a sex, they have kept their heads above water even with the present standard of their morality. "More brains, O Lord, more brains," is the only possible aspiration for women who are too stupid, too much enslaved, to realise that to immerse themselves in emotionalism is to destroy in themselves every chance of fullness of life.

M. P. WILLCOCKS.

PHILOSOPHY AND FAITH.*

Posthumous works are a risk. If an author has left manuscripts sufficiently finished, it may often be a pious duty to publish them after his death, provided that they are properly edited. Were it not for this, how little we should possess of Dr. Hort's writings, for example? But it is not so with the materials which have been at the disposal of Mr. Wilfrid Richmond for this book. It is indeed two books, printed together, and neither is a book; neither half of the volume was intended by the author for publication in this form, and the nexus between the two is not obvious.

The first part consists of about a hundred pages filled with extracts from notes of lectures and from sermons which have been already published. These are woven into a seeming unity by the editor. To many they will recall Dr. Scott Holland's most congenial and satisfactory contribution to religious thought, his early sermons. Hutton's praise of them in the *Spectator* was amply justified. They were overflowing with language, but the preacher had real ideas under his eloquence, and his warm interest in human life always proved attractive. When he became speculative or theological, it was his instincts rather than his argument which were helpful. He tried to justify the energy and fullness of life by faith in the Catholic Creed and the sacramental system, believing that thus alone could the world be interpreted rationally. From this he drew an inspiration for social progress, especially in his later days; for him "faith" involved a fearless sense of fellowship, and he preached this in season and out of season. Well, these pages are reminiscences of Canon Holland at his best. To people who have forgotten or who do not care to consult his volumes of sermons, they will prove a useful summary. Still, a summary is less than a living utterance. And the author was himself in jets of eloquence and appeal rather than in a coherent, sustained argument. He had more of the seer than the thinker.

The second part of the book, on the Fourth Gospel, deduces from it ideas of philosophy and faith and truth which lay in Dr. Holland's mind. As a contribution to the serious criticism of the subject, they are negligible. What we get in these scattered notes is the judgment of a sensible outsider upon a problem of technical criticism. Dr. Holland has some acute criticisms to offer, such as would occur to a keen mind. But these pages do not suggest that he was ever inside the problem of the Fourth Gospel. He wished to find in it the final and first-hand interpretation of Christ, charged with an insight and authority to which the Synoptic evangelists could not lay any claim. The Johannine authorship was therefore an axiom rather than an inference for him, and the difficulties raised by this hypothesis were no more to him than "superficial enigmas."

It is suggested that "this volume may be followed by another, prepared by the Rev. N. S. Talbot, containing some of the very full notes taken by him of Dr. Holland's professional lectures, supplemented and corrected by transcripts of Dr. Holland's own notes." In the interest of Dr. Holland's reputation, we hope that this project will not be carried out. To judge from the present volume, we should say that Dr. Holland's printed books contain any ideas that he had it in him to express. His work along this line was done, before he came to Oxford. Let his reputation rest with his earlier books of sermons.

JAMES MOFFATT, D.D., D.Litt.

* "The Philosophy of Faith and the Fourth Gospel." By Henry Scott Holland. 12s. net. (John Murray.)

THE CAPTIVES.*

Nearly eleven and a half years ago I selected a book called "The Wooden Horse" from a "batch" of novels which had found their way to my study to be reviewed for a weekly paper, and I remember to-day, as I take up "The Captives" with more knowledge of the author, how good it was to find a steady, sincere, finely conceived piece of literary fiction amid a pile of indifferent stuff. I remember, with some pleasure, that the review I then wrote was not without the feeling that Mr. Walpole would take a high place among our novelists. Since then most of his novels and stories have come my way, and the impression of strength and fineness continues unbroken.

It would appear that most of the characters in this latest volume by Mr. Walpole are "captives" in one sense or another, but I hesitate to burden him with the assumption of a "message" or a "purpose"; it is much better to admit, without imputations of a moral "lesson"—fly in amber, sting in tail—that here is an excellent novel, mature in thought and in style experienced, meet for its companions. The heroine, Maggie Cardinal, is a captive to the very end; the daughter of a good-for-nothing rector, she finds, after his death, some sort of a home with two aunts in London, and it is here that her most literal thraldom begins. But her spirit is never broken, however greatly her physical liberty may be restricted, and the mistake of those two amazing aunts was to imagine that they could trim strong young wings to their own low and level flight. For they belong to a sect whose members watch for the "Second Coming" and worship strangely in a fearsome chapel, attended principally by servant-girls and nondescript women lost to a healthy sense of sex, and seeking outlet for emotion in melancholia and hysteria. One is inclined to think that this by-way of religion is exaggerated slightly for the sake of effect and contrast; but the point is a small one, and I have formed one of the congregation in communities almost as desolate—to my sorrow and ultimate wisdom perhaps. Aunt Anne is the one who takes charge and rules the household; she is a wonderfully drawn character. Calm, lost in her ideal, always contemplating some presumably fair spiritual

* "The Captives." By Hugh Walpole. 7s. 6d. net. (Macmillan.)

vision, she is of the stuff of which fanatics are made; her very outward semblance of austerity gives her a certain authority and power of control over others. To her, Aunt Elizabeth is merely a foil, unimportant and weak and ready to be demonstrative when she gets the chance to be alone with poor Maggie.

Simply from lack of experience in life—she had read practically nothing and was a genuine child of nature—Maggie endures this gloomy prison of a house for years; and only when she has fallen in love with the son of the presiding minister of the sect does she begin to live largely. Martin Warlock was a waster, who valued women little save for what variety they could bring; he had travelled, had seen the world fairly thoroughly, and, as often happens in real life, found himself captive in turn when he met the strange girl who was as innocent as the day. He has two redeeming points—he is devoted to his father, and he tries hard to "back out" when he finds that this time, with Maggie, it is the "real right thing." With the utmost freedom, she gives her heart to him, and nothing that he can tell her of his past, nor his candid statement that he will probably tire of her after a time, can assault her passion with the faintest hope of success.

To such a nature as Maggie's, situated thus, life was bound to show an ugly side. Martin goes abroad; a young clergyman falls in love with Maggie; she marries him, having told him that she can give him only affection and that she will never forget Martin. The result, of course, is tragedy in the parsonage at Skeaton-on-Sea to which Paul Trenchard takes his wife. Into the prolonged duel between Grace Trenchard, his sister, and the new mistress of the household, Mr. Walpole has put some of his best work; it is excellent comedy—the comedy that lies close to tears.

To sum up: if I want beauty, I shall turn to "The Wooden Horse" again; but if I want strength, assurance in technique, life in grim earnest, and invigoration, I shall read, after a judicious interval, "The Captives" once more. And in doing so I shall note how far Mr. Walpole has advanced in mastery of his chosen art, and hope that I have not missed "The Figure in the Carpet."

WILFRID L. RANDELL.

Novel Notes.

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